



1806. D6

DISCIPLINE OF THE YEARLY MEETING OF FRIENDS.

1806.







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Friends, Society of.

# DISCIPLINE

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OF THE

YEARLY MEETING OF FRIENDS,

HELD IN

BALTIMORE.

PRINTED BY DIRECTION OF THE MEETING

HELD IN THE YEAR

1806.

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## INTRODUCTION.

In the morning of the gospel day, the apostles and disciples found it necessary to meet together for the consolation and strength one of another; when, pursuant to the nature and design of the gospel, which brought peace on earth and good will to men, a care arose for the edification of the church, and that all, being of one family, might be of one mind.

And as it hath pleased the great Head of the Church, to gather us a people to himself, and to inspire us with degrees of the same universal love and good will, by which was ushered in the dispensation of the gospel, we are engaged not only to meet together for the worship of God, but also for the exercise of a christian care over each other, for the preservation of all in unity of faith and practice, answerable to the description which He, the ever blessed shepherd, gave of his flock, "by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." John xiii. 35.

For this important end, and as an exterior hedge of preservation to us, against the many temptations and dangers to which we are expos-

ed, the following rules, which have been occasionally adopted by the society, now form our code of discipline. In the exercise whereof, it is to be observed that if any member be found in a conduct subversive of its order, or repugnant to the testimonies with which we believe we are intrusted for the promotion of truth and righteousness, it becomes our indispensable duty to treat with such in christian meekness and brotherly compassion, without unnecessary delay or improper exposure; according to the direction of our Lord to his church, "if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault, between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother; but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it to the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man, and a publican." Math. chap. xviii. 15, 16, 17.

This is the extent of the censure of the society against irreclaimable offenders, and whilst we disown them from being members of our religious community, it is recommended to be done in such a disposition of mind, as may convince them, that we sincerely desire their recovery and restoration. From the right exercise

hereof, we believe no degree of persecution or imposition can be justly inferred; for the imposition rests on the part of those who (as has sometimes happened) insist on being retained as members, whilst at open variance with our religious body, either in principle or practice.

For the more regular and effectual support of the order of the society, it will be observed, that besides the usual meetings for the purpose of divine worship, others for the exercise of our Discipline, are instituted, subordinate to each other; all of which are either immediately or remotely accountable to the Yearly Meeting. These meetings have distinct allotments of service, and experience has abundantly shewn, that when this service is attended to in uprightness and dedication of heart, with a single eye to the honour of our holy Head, and the benefit and edification one of another, in the love wherewith he hath loved us, our assemblies are favoured with his aid and direction.

Although this code of Discipline is printed for the use of our own society, yet should it meet the public eye, it is not doubted but the serious and candid reader will observe throughout the whole, the earnest endeavours of the Yearly Meeting for the promotion of virtue and religion.

And whilst we earnestly recommend this work to the notice and regard of Friends, we are not without a clear prospect that an acquaintance with the letter of our Discipline, will be insufficient to produce the desired effect, unless, in the exercise thereof, we are careful to move and act under the immediate influence of the spirit of Christ, in the pure love of the gospel.

May we therefore, in our Meetings for the exercise of the Discipline, humbly seek to be clothed with the spirit of wisdom and charity; this will divest the mind of a dependance on our own strength and abilities, endue us with patience and condescension towards each other, and being preserved in fellowship agreeably to the declaration of our Lord, "One is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren," a qualification will be experienced in our several stations and movements to build up one another in that faith which works by love, to the purifying of the heart.

Nor can we conclude, without desiring in an especial manner, that our youth of the present and succeeding generations may be early and fully instructed in our religious principles, and in the nature and design of our Christian Discipline; and through divine assistance be enabled to adorn our holy profession by a conversation and conduct consistent with godliness and honesty;

thereby avoiding the reproach which many, through a defection in principle, or a degeneracy in practice, have brought, both upon themselves, and the religious body of which they profess to be members.



DISCIPLINE  
OF THE  
YEARLY MEETING OF FRIENDS,  
HELD IN  
BALTIMORE.

*Printed by direction of the Meeting held in the year 1805.*

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APPEALS.

Whilst the Yearly Meeting, in granting the liberty of an appeal, considers it as a precious privilege, it is affectionately desired that all may be careful how they encourage persons of improper dispositions to trouble superior meetings therewith.

If any be dissatisfied with, or think themselves aggrieved by the judgment of a Monthly Meeting, they may, after a copy of the testimony of disownment is delivered to them, notify the first or second Monthly Meeting following, (but no other) of their intention of appealing to the ensuing Quarterly Meeting: which notification, the Monthly Meeting should enter on its minutes, and appoint four or more Friends, to attend the Quarterly Meeting, with copies of the proceedings relative to the case, signed by the clerk, there to shew the reasons whereon that judgment was founded. The Quarterly Meeting is then to refer the same to a solid com-

mittee of Friends, noticing the propriety of any objection made by the appellant against persons thus nominated, (omitting those of the Monthly Meeting from which the appeal comes,) and to confirm or reverse the said judgment, as on impartial examination, shall appear to be right; taking care to inform the party of the result.

If an appellant, on being informed of the judgment of a Quarterly Meeting, shall be dissatisfied therewith, he or she may notify, either that or the next Quarter, (but not afterwards) of their intention to apply to the Yearly Meeting for a further hearing: the said Quarterly Meeting, after recording such notification, is in like manner to appoint at least three Friends, to attend the Yearly Meeting, with copies of the records of both Monthly and Quarterly Meetings in the case, signed by their clerks; here it is to be finally determined, and a copy of the determination is to be sent to the Quarterly Meeting from which the appeal came. Notices of appeals are to be forwarded from subordinate to superior meetings, in the regular reports of such meetings.

It is our earnest solicitude that Friends may maintain the discipline of the church, in the spirit of the Gospel, which breathes peace on earth and good will to men. Under this in-

fluence they will be favoured with wisdom, prudently to determine the affairs of society, and thereby be the more likely to prevent appeals from coming to the Yearly Meetings, which, besides tending to prolong it, sometimes occasion uneasiness to the body.

### ARBITRATIONS.

When differences arise between our members in regard to their property, they are to proceed in the following manner:

The party who thinks him or herself aggrieved, should in the first place, calmly and kindly, request the other to comply with the demand; and, if this be disputed, the complainant, or if residing at too great a distance, some Friend whom he or she may authorize, should take with him one or two of the overseers, or other discreet Friends, and in their presence repeat the demand.

If this step also fail of the desired effect, the parties should be advised to choose a suitable number of Friends as arbitrators, and mutually engage, by bond, or other written instrument adapted to the occasion, to abide by their determination.

Should this proposal be acceded to, and arbitrators accordingly chosen; they ought as speedily as circumstances will admit, to appoint a

time and place, and attend to the business without unnecessary delay; giving the parties a fair and full hearing, in the presence of each other, but listening to neither of them apart, nor suffering their own sentiments to be known abroad, till they have fully digested the subject, and come to a clear decision; which they should be careful to do within the time agreed on.

But if either of the parties refuse to submit the matter in dispute, to arbitrators; or, when that is done, neglect to give his or her attendance when desired, without assigning a sufficient reason; or not abide by their award when issued; in either of these cases, the person so offending, should be complained of to the Monthly Meeting of which he or she is a member; and if the brotherly endeavours and admonitions of society in this capacity, fail to produce a conformity to justice in the case, the said meeting should proceed to disown the offender, unless such person make it evident to the satisfaction of the meeting, that the award or proceedings have been erroneous or unjust. In which case, the matter in dispute may be referred to the same, or other arbitrators, as the meeting shall judge best; and their award shall be final. After which, if either of the parties at variance, prove so regardless of peace and unity, as not to acquiesce in such confirmed, or corrected determination, the Monthly

Meeting to which he or she belongs, should proceed to issue a testimony against the person so refusing.

Where arbitrators are at a loss for want of legal knowledge, it will be proper for them, at the joint expence of the parties, to take the opinion of council learned in the law, in order to qualify them for giving a proper judgment in the matter referred to them. And that they may the better answer the end of their appointment, and be helpful in conciliating the minds of the parties, they ought not to consider themselves as advocates for those by whom they are chosen, but as men whose duty it is to judge righteously, fearing the Lord. They should shun all previous information respecting the case; or, having heard any thing in regard to it, remain as much as possible unbiased thereby. They should reject no evidence or witness proposed; nor receive any, but in the presence of both parties; and in their award, they need not assign any reason for their determination.

And whereas there may be some circumstances even in disputed matters, wherein the foregoing equitable mode of proceeding cannot be complied with; such as, first, the party absconding, or leaving the country with design to defraud his or her creditors; or, second, apparent

danger of bankruptcy, or being overloaded with debts, and other creditors generally coming on, which would occasion manifest damage to the claimant, by the time it would take in pursuing the above method; or, third, where there may be danger of future damage, as in case of executors, administrators or trustees: it may therefore be necessary, and it is directed, that the Monthly Meetings where such cases happen, and on due enquiry appear truly so, do hold excused such as shall in the two first mentioned cases in this paragraph, appear to them really necessitated to proceed at law; and in the latter case, of executors, administrators or trustees, where it shall appear to the meeting, that the matter is of importance, and that our friendly way would be unsafe, such may be permitted to have the matter tried at law, with this caution, that the parties on both sides, behave towards each other in brotherly love, decency and moderation, without anger or animosity; which will be a becoming testimony even in courts, and shew that nothing but the nature of the case, and our station in common with others, under the laws of the land, take any of us there.

As it may sometimes occur that a member, either for want of a clear understanding of the business, or through an improper influence, may present a complaint against another member,

wherein the overseers, after fully hearing both parties, being decidedly of opinion that the case does not require a reference, they are to advise a speedy settlement thereof; which being ineffectual, and the complainant remaining dissatisfied therewith, he may have liberty to inform the Preparative Meeting, where the other party is a member, (without mentioning any name) that having a matter in dispute with one of their members, he is desirous of their assistance in order to a settlement thereof. The said meeting is then to appoint a judicious committee to enquire into the propriety of leaving the matter to arbitration; if they should judge that the complaint ought to be referred, they are to advise that it be submitted accordingly; but if the said committee concur in judgment with the overseers, the complaint is to be dismissed.

It is the desire of the Yearly Meeting, that our members differing on account of worldly affairs, do avoid as much as possible to engage Friends in the ministry as arbitrators in such cases.

#### BIRTHS AND BURIALS.

Two or more suitable Friends of each Particular Meeting, should be appointed by Monthly Meetings to attend at the funerals of our members, for the assistance of those concerned, and to see that good order is observed.

In order that meetings may not be held at the interment of our deceased members, in a formal way, or as a customary circumstance, the proposal for holding any such meeting, should be previously submitted to the consideration of the elders and overseers, (or other solid Friends,) either of the meeting to which the deceased belonged, or of that within the compass of which the interment is to take place; that the direction of truth may be waited for and followed.

And to prevent the introduction of improper interments amongst us—two or more Friends should be appointed by Monthly or Preparative Meetings, (as the case may require,) to the care of our several burying grounds, and that no person who was not a member be buried therein, without a written permit, signed by one or two of those Friends; who should take care that such interment comport with our plain order: also, that our burial grounds be properly enclosed and kept in decent order.

It is further desired, as becoming the solemnity of the occasion, that at all interments, time be allowed for a pause, both before and after the corpse is put into the ground, in order that the impressive influence of an occasion so awful, may have its proper effect upon the minds of those who are present.

Friends are also enjoined, to maintain our testimony against affixing monuments of any description to graves, for the purpose of distinction, in any of our burying grounds; and if any yet remain therein, that they be forthwith removed; and that they avoid the imitation of the custom of wearing, or giving, mourning habits, and all extravagant expences on account of the interment of the dead.

As great inconveniency may arise from a want of due attention to keeping a regular record of births and burials, it is enjoined upon each Monthly Meeting, to appoint a careful Friend, whose duty it shall be, to keep in a book provided at the expence of the Monthly Meeting, for the purpose, a record of all births and burials of members, which occur within their respective limits, and which shall be offered to him for that purpose. And in order to engage the attention of Monthly Meetings more closely to this subject, it is further enjoined, that committees be appointed at least once in three years, to examine the records.

*The following forms of the records are proposed,  
being both simple and explicit.*

BIRTHS.

Names of the Children.	When born.	Names of the Parents.	Their residence.	Occasional notes.

BURIALS.

Names of the deceased.	When dec.	Age.	Where buried.	Late residence.	Occasional notes.

BOOKS.

It being a business assigned to the Meeting for Sufferings, to take the oversight of all writings proposed to be printed, which relate to our religious principles or testimonies, our

members who may have it in prospect to publish any such writings, are to lay them before the said meeting, for its advice and concurrence. And if any of our members shall print or publish any writing agaist the advice of said meeting, or which shall have a tendency to excite disunity and discord, such persons should be complained of to the Monthly Meeting to which they belong, and if they cannot be convinced of the impropriety of their conduct, and condemn the same, to the satisfaction of said meeting, they should be testified against, as opposed to the peace and good order of society.

It is considered incumbent on parents and heads of families, to prevent as much as possible, all those under their direction, from perusing those pernicious publications which are written for the purpose of weakening the authority of the christian religion, or exciting doubts concerning the authenticity of the holy scriptures, and those saving truths declared in them; lest the immature and feeble minds of such, should be poisoned thereby, and a foundation laid for the greatest evils. It is also enjoined on all the members of our religious society, that they discourage and suppress the reading of plays, romances and novels, which being written by persons of corrupt minds, have a necessary tendency to awaken and invigorate those impure pro-

pensities, "which war against the soul," and which it is the duty and interest of every christian mind to keep in a state of suppression.

## CERTIFICATES.

Quarterly and Monthly Meetings are to take care, that all certificates or minutes which may be given to any Friends travelling in the service of the ministry be recorded, and upon the return of such Friend, seasonably delivered back to the meeting; and that all certificates of removal brought by any Friends intending to become residents, shall be lodged in the Monthly Meeting, where the same are accepted, and also, that every meeting keep a record of all certificates which they give forth.

We feel it our concern to caution Friends to be very circumspect how they remove themselves and families. It having been observed, that the dissolving of old, and forming of new connections, have in some instances been attended with effects prejudicial to a growth in the truth; both in the heads and younger branches of families, especially where the inclination to such removals hath originated in worldly motives. And as the religious growth and establishment of children, being the most interesting, ought to be the principal engagement of the minds of parents, it is the affectionate desire

of the Yearly Meeting, that in putting them forward in a way of life, the probable effect it may have on their minds, be the chief object in view. In these cases, we recommend to our members, both young and old, to give close attention to the pointings of Divine Wisdom, and also timely to consult experienced Friends, previously to their fixing a resolution of changing their residence.

When certificates of removal from one Monthly Meeting to another, are received, the persons recommended shall be considered members of the meeting to which they remove. But if any such persons shall fall into circumstances requiring pecuniary relief, within one year after the receipt of such certificates, they shall be considered as belonging to the Monthly Meeting from which they came: yet the meeting removed to, ought to assist them, giving speedy notice thereof to the other. Whereupon, that meeting should immediately take care of them, and repay the charges which have been, or may be incurred on that account. If the meeting from which such persons removed, (on consulting with that within which they are) shall desire them to return, they ought to comply, as soon as they have ability so to do; and the Friends where they reside, should yield them such advice and assistance as the case may require: and

if any persons on being so required, shall refuse to comply, the said Monthly Meeting may deal with them as opposed to the order of society; and if they cannot be prevailed with to submit, issue a testimony of denial against them.

The above rule, enjoining the return of members to the meetings from which they have removed, is, however, not designed to extend to the wife of a person who is not in membership with us, nor to such of their minor children as are members; but if such should need relief, within one year, as aforesaid, they should be assisted in the manner above recommended, by the meeting they removed from. If any Friends should be reduced in their circumstances, by fire or other sudden unavoidable losses, though it may be within one year after their removal as aforesaid, they should be kindly assisted and relieved by the meeting to which they have removed, and be considered members thereof.

All members removing beyond the limits of their Monthly Meetings, whether for a permanent or only a certain limited time, are to apply to their respective meetings for certificates directed to those within the limits of which they propose to sojourn or settle. But if any shall remove without so applying, the Monthly Meetings of which they are members, after making the usual enquiry, and finding no obstruction,

should, without improper delay, send certificates for them, to the Monthly Meetings within the limits of which they have removed; but if their previous conduct require that they be dealt with, and the distance be such as to render it inconvenient for the meetings they removed from, the Monthly Meetings, within the verge of which they are, should be requested to treat with them, and report the effect of their care: on which, if it prove satisfactory, certificates of removal may be directed; but if otherwise, and testimonies of disunion be issued: the meeting where they reside, should be furnished with copies thereof, to be delivered to the parties, with information of their right of appeal.

Where apprentices, or persons under age, are under a necessity of going from one place to another, their parents or guardians, masters or mistresses, should apply for certificates for them, recommending them to the care and oversight of the Monthly Meetings, whereunto they remove.

If any persons appearing as Friends, come within the compass of any Monthly Meeting, not being recommended by certificates, and be of disorderly conduct, the overseers, or other concerned Friends, should enquire whether or not, they are members of our society; and if they prove so to be, admonish them, or if the

occasion require it, report the case to the Preparative, and from thence to the Monthly Meeting; which should thereupon, inform the Monthly Meetings of which they are members, of the circumstances, and take the direction of said meeting, for dealing further with them, agreeably to our rules in cases of that nature.

Monthly Meetings are to take due care, that certificates of removal be seasonably forwarded, by suitable conveyances, to the Monthly Meetings to which they are directed; they being the exclusive property of such meetings.

#### CHARITY AND UNITY.

Where there is any appearance of dissention, or of resentment and shyness amongst our members, the parties should be timely and tenderly apprised of the danger to which they expose both themselves and others, and earnestly exhorted to mutual condescension and forgiveness, becoming the followers of Christ; and if any, notwithstanding such endeavours for their welfare, continue to manifest an implacable enmity to others, the overseers or other judicious Friends of the Preparative or Monthly Meeting, to which they belong, should be informed thereof; who are to labour further with them: when, if they still prove inflexible, they ought to be complained of to the Monthly Meeting to which

they belong; which, after labouring with them without the desired effect, ought to testify against them, as out of the unity of the body; the very end of the existence of which is, to promote peace on earth, and good will amongst men.

### CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

Liberty of conscience being the common right of all men, and particularly essential to the well-being of religious societies, we hold it to be indispensably incumbent upon us, to maintain it inviolably amongst ourselves; and therefore exhort all in profession with us, to decline accepting any office or station in civil government, the duties of which are inconsistent with our religious principles; or in the exercise of which they may be, or apprehend themselves to be, under the necessity of exacting from others any compliances against which they are conscientiously scrupulous.

If any persons in membership with us, notwithstanding the preceding admonition, shall persist in a conduct so repugnant to our principles, it is the sense of the Yearly Meeting, that they be treated with, as in other cases of offence; and if they cannot be brought to see and acknowledge their error, the Monthly Meetings to which

they belong, should proceed to testify against them.

It is also our judgment, that Friends ought not, in any wise, to be active or accessory in electing, or promoting to be elected, their brethren or others to such offices or stations in civil government, the execution whereof tends to lay waste our christian testimony, or subject their brethren or others to sufferings on account of their conscientious scruples. The principle of truth, calls us out of contention ; it even seeks not its own ends by means productive of animosity ; much less therefore should its professors indulge themselves in strife for objects of a perish-  
ing nature.

Believing therefore that we are called to shew forth to the world, in life and practice, that the blessed reign of the Messiah, the Prince of Peace, is begun, and we doubt not, will proceed until it attain its completion in the earth, when, according to the prophecies of Isaiah and Micah, “ Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”—We cannot consistently join with such as form combinations of a hostile nature against any ; much less in opposition to those placed in authority ; nor can we unite with or encourage such as revile or asperse them, for it is written, “ Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.” Acts, xxiii and 5th.

## CONDUCT &amp; CONVERSATION.

Such are to be dealt with, who are in the practices of lying, drunkenness, swearing, cursing; unchaste or disreputable connexions between men and women, or keeping company for such unlawful purposes; together with every other immoral or scandalous practice: and when persons are guilty in these respects, or any of them, after being dealt with by the overseers or other concerned Friends, if they be brought to a sense of the iniquity thereof, such offenders are, without improper delay, to remove the scandal, and clear, as much as possible, our holy profession therefrom, by acknowledging and condemning the offence, in writing, under their hands, to the satisfaction of the Monthly Meetings, to which they belong. And if any such offenders refuse so to acknowledge and condemn their faults, the said meetings, ought speedly to testify against them.

If any in membership with us shall blaspheme, or speak profanely of Almighty God, Christ Jesus, or the Holy Spirit, they ought to be timely and earnestly treated with for the conviction of their understandings, that they may experience repentance and forgiveness; but should any notwithstanding such brotherly labour, persist in their error, or deny the divinity of our Lord and

Saviour Jesus Christ, the immediate revelation of the Holy Spirit, or the authenticity of the scriptures; as it will be thereby manifest that they are not one in faith with us, the Monthly Meetings, where they belong, ought, after the aforesaid earnest and religious endeavours without effect, to declare the same, and issue their testimony accordingly.

It is the earnest concern of the Yearly Meeting that in all our dealings and transactions among men, strict justice may be observed, and that no motives of pecuniary interest may induce any of our members to impose upon each other, or upon any with whom they may have commercial intercourse; and it is directed, that Monthly Meetings be careful to extend suitable admonition against all deviations in these respects, for the help and recovery of delinquents; and as it is obvious that there can be no just pretensions to religious rectitude, without a conformity to moral justice, Monthly Meetings are authorised to disown those, who will not be reclaimed by their brotherly endeavours in these respects.

#### CONVINCED PERSONS.

It is directed that the following order be observed respecting persons who apply for admittance into membership. They are to apply to the overseers, or elders, who, when they are easy

so to do, are to lay the case before the Preparative Meeting ; and after that meeting is fully satisfied, by paying a visit or otherwise, they are to lay it before the Monthly Meeting ; which meeting shall appoint some suitable Friends to enquire into the lives and conversations of the applicants, and also to take solid opportunities of conference with them, in order the better to understand whether their motives for such request be sincere, and on the ground of convincement ; and report their sense thereof, with which, if the meeting be satisfied, a minute should be made signifying the acceptance of such into membership, and appointing a Friend or two to acquaint the persons thereof.

But in all cases, Friends are exhorted to attend carefully to the advice of the apostle, "Lay hands suddenly on no man :" The neglect of such caution having often been injurious both to the individuals and to society : to them, by settling them in a false rest ; and to society, by adding to its numbers, without increasing its joy ; both of which, being circumstances of acknowledged importance, Monthly Meetings are desired to be weighty in their deliberations and results, on all such occasions ; and when united in believing that the applicants are clearly convinced of our religious principles, and in a good degree

subject to the government of the divine witness in their own hearts, manifested by circumspection of life and conduct, the said meetings should receive such into membership.

### DAYS & TIMES.

As we are persuaded, that no religious act can be acceptable to God, unless produced by the influence and assistance of his Holy Spirit, it is our judgment that our members cannot consistently join with any, in the observance of public fasts, feasts, or what are termed holy-days, or such injunctions and forms as are devised by the will of man in regard thereto: for though exterior observances of a similar kind, were once authorised under the law, as shadows of things to come, yet they who come to Christ, will, we believe, assuredly find that in him all shadows end; and that "he hath obtained a better ministry, by how much also is he the Mediator of a better covenant, and established upon better promises." Heb. viii and 6.—"Let no man therefore, says the apostle, judge you in meat, or drink, or in respect of an holy-day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ." Col. ii—16 and 17.—The same apostle also thus expostulates with some, who it appears had fallen from the true faith in these respects: "But now, after

that ye have known God, how turn ye again to the beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? ye observe days, and months, and times and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain." Gal. iv 9, 10 and 11.

Wherefore, under a humble and grateful sense of the abundant mercies and favours of our heavenly Father, let us, as a religious society, continually feel our hearts filled with thanksgiving and praise to him ; an aspiration which is ever his due, and to be acknowledged by his creatures with the deepest reverence, and not with the "bowing of the head like a bulrush for a day," nor with those tumultuous demonstrations of joy, and nightly illuminations, which are generally attended with rioting, drunkenness, and many other excesses incompatible with the christian name.

Whilst, therefore, it is the earnest concern of the Yearly Meeting that we may be found worshippers within the temple, it is affectionately desired that our members may be individually cautious not to give occasion of additional suffering to the truly conscientious amongst us, by any compliance with such observances as our worthy ancestors, were rightly concerned to bear testimony against.

## DEFAMATION &amp; DETRACTION.

As the manifest tendency of the mischievous spirit of tale-bearing and detraction, is to lay waste the unity of society, by disseminating discord and strife among brethren and neighbours ; Friends are enjoined to watch over themselves, and each other, in order to discourage and suppress every appearance of such dispositions. The order prescribed by our blessed Lord, should be strictly observed in every case of apprehended injury---viz. “If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone ; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother ; but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that, in the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church ; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.”

It is further directed, that, in whomsoever this weakness appears, it may be immediately checked ; and if any give way to it, to the obvious injury of the reputation or interest of others, let them be faithfully admonished, by elders, overseers, or other concerned Friends ; and if they persist, and cannot be prevailed with to give due satisfaction, the Preparative, and (if expe-

dient) Monthly Meeting should be informed of it, and deal further with them ; when, if this also fail to produce the desired effect, they should be testified against.

Should any offenders in these respects shelter themselves under a pretence, that they say no more than they have heard from others, but refuse to discover who those are, such should in like manner be dealt with as tale-bearers, and testified against.

## DISCIPLINE &amp; MEETINGS FOR DISCIPLINE.

The existence of our Meetings for Discipline having, on experience, been found extensively beneficial, it is earnestly recommended that they may be maintained in that authority, wherein they were established : For, where any have been negligent in attending them, or opposed to their usefulness, it has been perceived that carnality and spiritual death have been the consequences.

Where any transgress the rules of our discipline, they should, without partiality, be admonished, and sought in the spirit of love and divine charity, so that it may be seen by all, that the restoring dispositions of meekness and christian affection abound ; before church censure takes place ; that a gospel spirit is the spring and motive to all our performances, as well in discipline, as in worship.

The connexion and subordination of our Meetings for Discipline are thus: Preparative Meetings are accountable to the Monthly; Monthly to the Quarterly; and Quarterly to the Yearly Meeting: so that if the Yearly Meeting be at any time dissatisfied with the proceedings of any inferior meetings; or a Quarterly Meeting, with the proceedings of either of its Monthly Meetings; or a Monthly Meeting with the proceedings of either of its Preparative Meetings; such meetings ought, with readiness and meekness, to render accounts thereof when required.

No Quarterly Meeting should be set up, or laid down, without the consent of the Yearly Meeting; no Monthly Meeting, without the consent of the Quarterly Meeting; and no Preparative or other meeting for business or worship, until application to the Monthly Meeting be first made; and, when there approved, the consent of the Quarterly Meeting be also obtained. Also, no meeting for worship, intended to consist of Friends belonging to two or more Monthly Meetings, shall be established, until the proposal be offered to, and approved by, those Monthly Meetings, and the consent of their respective Quarterly Meeting or meetings be obtained: when the meeting proposed, is opened, it should be attended by a few solid Friends, deputed by each of the said Monthly Meetings. And if at any

time it be thought expedient, that a Preparative Meeting should be held at the same place, the consent of the said Monthly and Quarterly Meetings should be, in like manner, applied for and obtained ; and the said Preparative Meeting should be annexed to either of those Monthly Meetings, as may appear most likely to conduce to the benefit and convenience of the individuals who compose it, and the advantage of society.

It is directed that a book be provided by every Monthly and Quarterly Meeting, and fair records kept therein, of all matters which shall come before and be determined by them. Monthly Meetings, particularly, are advised to attend to, and finish all such business with care and dispatch, that it may, at no time, suffer by improper delay : and if any case under consideration, prove too weighty or difficult for them to determine, they should apply to their respective Quarterly Meetings for assistance ; or, if the circumstances be such as to require it, refer it thereto by minute.

It is the conclusion of the Yearly Meeting, as a general rule, in all cases, that where any Monthly or Quarterly Meeting has occasion for, and requests copies of any papers, minutes or records of another Monthly or Quarterly Meeting, the same should be accordingly granted.

## 36 DISCIPLINE & MEETINGS FOR DISCIPLINE.

Where any difference happens among Friends, and the same be entered in any Monthly or Quarterly Meeting book, if the parties, or either of them, think that copies of such entries may be useful, or necessary for them, and request the same; such Monthly or Quarterly Meetings shall have a discretionary power to give or refuse such copies, according to the circumstances and motives attending.

After a charge against a member, for disorderly conduct, is entered on the minutes of a Meeting for Discipline, he or she should not be permitted to sit in any of our Meetings for Discipline, until the case is determined, and the meeting satisfied.

It is directed, that a suitable number of Friends be appointed in each Monthly Meeting, representatives to attend the service of the Quarterly Meeting, with such reports in writing, signed by the clerk, as may be given them in charge: also, that at least four Friends be appointed, for the like service, in each Quarterly Meeting, to attend the Yearly Meeting. And it is earnestly advised and desired, that all Friends who submit to these important services, may be punctual in their attendance; or if prevented by sickness, or any other unavoidable occurrence, that they be careful to send information thereof; also, that those who are under appointments to

attend meetings as representatives, do not withdraw therefrom before the conclusion of such meetings, without obtaining the consent thereof.

It is also directed, that Friends keep an account of such sufferings to which they may be subjected from the world, for maintaining those testimonies of truth, which we believe it is our duty peculiarly to bear: and that Monthly Meetings use suitable endeavours, that such accounts may be collected and transmitted to the Quarterly Meetings; and when there approved, that Quarterly Meetings forward them annually to the Meeting for Sufferings.

As to the rights of children, whose parents have been married contrary to the rules of our discipline, and one or both of them afterwards received into membership; they are not to be considered as members, until application for their admission be made, either by themselves, or by their parent, parents, or guardians, on their behalf, and the Monthly Meeting which is applied to, on a solid consideration of the case, is easy to admit them, or any of them. But the rights of children, born of parents who have been married according to our rules, and disowned after their birth, are not intended to be affected by this regulation.

If any member of our religious society shall discover so much weakness of mind as to

apply to those called Jugglers or Fortune-Tellers, or to those who by pretending to any art or skill whatever, profess a knowledge of future events, hidden transactions, or where things lost or stolen may be found; or if any of our members shall use, or pretend to such art or skill; under a just abhorrence of such delusion, it is directed that they be speedily dealt with, and if they do not manifest a due sense of their evil conduct, that they be testified against.

A committee should be annually appointed, in each of our Quarterly and Monthly Meetings, to nominate clerks; which may afford opportunity for their being seasonably changed, and more of our qualified members exercised in those services.

As the use and design of Preparative Meetings are, in general, to digest and prepare business as occasion may require, which may be proper to be laid before Monthly Meetings; Friends ought to be careful therein, not to occasion unnecessary delays, or undertake to decide on any business which properly belongs to Monthly Meetings: and when it is concluded to carry any cases forward, they should be entered in writing, and some suitable Friend or Friends named, to produce them to the Monthly Meetings; proper notes whereof should be carefully preserved by clerks of Preparative Meetings. But no Prepa-

rative Meeting shall take cognizance of proposals of marriage, this being exclusively the business of Monthly Meetings.

### GAMING AND DIVERSIONS.

Friends are fervently exhorted to watch carefully over the youth, and others of our society, who may be so inclined, to prevent them by affectionate counsel and brotherly admonition, from frequenting stage-plays, horse-races, music, dancing, and other vain sports and amusements ; also, in a particular manner, from being concerned in lotteries, wagering, or any kind of gaming ; it being abundantly obvious, that those practices have a tendency to alienate the mind from the counsel of divine wisdom,—and to foster those impure dispositions which lead to debauchery and wickedness : If, therefore, any of our members fall into either of these practices, and cannot be prevailed with by private labour, to decline them, the Monthly Meetings to which they belong, should be informed thereof, and if they cannot be reclaimed by further labour, should proceed to disown them.

### LAW.

If any of our members be complained of, for withholding a just debt, they should be tenderly urged to payment ; and if this be unavailing,

they should be dealt with as in other cases of disorderly conduct: and if any appear unable to satisfy their creditors, they should be advised to call them together without loss of time, and submit the state of their affairs to their inspection: when, if the creditors apprehend a surrender of the debtors' effects necessary, they ought to consent, and if they refuse so to do, the Monthly Meetings of which they are members should be informed thereof; when, if the party still persist in refusing, they should be disowned without too long delay.

But, if any in such difficult circumstances, manifest an honest intention, and shall offer their all to their creditors, without preference, let compassion and aid be extended to them as brethren, and objects of christian charity; having done what they could, no more for the present can be justly expected from them. Yet it is the judgment of the Yearly Meeting, that if persons so failing in their circumstances, should at any time thereafter be favoured with ability to pay off their deficiencies, justice will require it of them, notwithstanding a composition with, and legal discharge from their creditors may have been obtained. This is however not meant to furnish any with a pretext for advancing such claims, while persons so deficient are honestly labouring to retrieve their circumstances, nor un-

til it shall clearly appear to their respective Monthly Meetings, or judicious committees thereof, that sufficient ability is arrived at; when, if they be requested to comply, and persist in refusing, the said meetings should proceed to disown them.

And it is the judgment of the Yearly Meeting, that if any members of our religious society, disregarding the gospel order prescribed by our discipline, shall arrest or sue at law, other members, (not being under such a necessity so to do, as may satisfy the overseers or other judicious Friends of the meeting to which the latter belong) they, in so doing, do depart from the peaceable principles of which we make profession; and if on being treated with by the Monthly Meetings to which they belong, they cannot be prevailed with to withdraw the suit, and pay the costs thereof, they should be disowned.

#### MARRIAGES.

It is affectionately desired by the Yearly Meeting, that all young or unmarried persons in membership with us, previously to their making any procedure in order to marriage, do seriously and humbly wait upon the Lord for his counsel and direction in this important concern; and when favoured with satisfactory clearness therein, they

should early acquaint their parents or guardians with their intentions, and wait for their consent: thus preservation from the dangerous bias of forward and uncertain affections, would be experienced, to the real benefit of the parties, and the comfort of their friends. And it is earnestly recommended to Friends, that they tenderly and carefully watch over the youth, and extend seasonable caution and admonition relative to this interesting subject as occasion may require.

All single persons about to marry at a distance from home, are to procure from the Monthly Meeting to which they belong certificates of their right of membership, and clearness from any other persons in respect to marriage engagements; and also to obtain the consent of their parents or guardians therein; and none are to be permitted to join themselves in marriage until such certificates, and the consent of their parents or guardians thereto, be also signified, in person or by writing, where it is practicable or can be reasonably obtained. But as there is tenderness due to children and wards, as well as to parents and guardians, it is not to be understood that marriages are to be prohibited, on account of capricious or improper objections on the part of the latter; but that Monthly Meetings exercise righteous judgment in such cases.

No Monthly Meeting is to permit any marri-

age to be proposed therein sooner than one year after the decease of former husband or wife.

The Yearly Meeting being tender concerning marriage, desires that no misdemeanor be treasured up against a person, until the time of presenting marriage to the meeting, and then disclosed, though perhaps long before done and known to those who so object to it at that time, which being a wrong thing, should be checked and prohibited in all meetings.

It is recommended to Monthly Meetings, that according to the ancient and decent practice amongst Friends, they take care, that such men and women Friends as make or receive proposals of marriage, do not dwell in the same house, from the commencement of such concern until the marriage is accomplished: that no ground may be furnished for evil reports, or surmises, but our holy profession be maintained unsullied in the view of men.

No marriages are to be accomplished in or immediately after any of our Monthly Meetings, or other meetings of business. And it is desired, that on these occasions, Friends in affluent circumstances, particularly, may be careful to set a becoming and encouraging example of moderation; avoiding unnecessarily expensive entertainments, and large companies: How much better would such superfluous expence be employed

in relieving the necessities of the poor: and especially guarding against inviting such as guests who are unlikely to conform to the order of our religious society.

Let such of our members be admonished, who keep company in order for marriage, with persons not of our society, or with any bound servants or apprentices, without the leave of their masters or mistresses; or who are either present themselves, or consent to their children being present at marriages of those not in membership with us. And where any are present at the marriage of a member, accomplished contrary to our order, they are to be dealt with, and where they cannot be brought to a sense of their error, let them be testified against.

Where parents or guardians have approved the visits or addresses of a man (a member of our religious society) to any of their children or those under their care, they ought not to retract the same, without giving such reasons as shall be satisfactory to the Monthly Meeting whereto they belong.

For the accomplishment of marriage the following order is to be observed: If both the parties belong to the same Monthly Meeting, the Men's and Women's Monthly Meetings should be informed of their intentions; and the man at a proper time be accompanied into Women's

Meeting, by a suitable Friend nominated thereto ; there the parties are first to declare that, "With divine permission and Friends' approbation, they intend marriage with each other;" whereupon, two Women Friends, should be appointed, by minute, to make enquiry respecting the woman ; and then proceeding to the Men's Meeting, they should repeat (or make) the same declaration there, and two Men Friends be in like manner appointed to enquire concerning the clearness of the man from any other marriage engagement. If the parties have parents or guardians present, their consent should be expressed ; or if the man be a member of another Monthly Meeting, the consent of his parents, if he have any, should be produced in writing, either then or at the next meeting, with a certificate from his Monthly Meeting of his clearness from other like engagements.

If the woman be a widow, having children, two or more Friends should be appointed in the meeting of which she is a member, to see that the rights of her children be legally secured. At the next meeting, if the committees report that careful enquiry has been made, and no obstruction to the further proceeding of the parties appears, the meetings are to leave them at liberty to accomplish their marriage according to our rules, and appoint two Friends of each sex, to attend

and see that good order is observed: Marriages are to be solemnized at the usual Week-day Meetings for worship, or at a meeting appointed, at a seasonable hour in the forenoon on some other convenient Week-day, and at the meeting-house to which the woman belongs. Previous notice to Friends generally, in the latter case, being given.

Towards the conclusion of the said meeting, after being held a seasonable time, the parties are to stand up, and taking each other by the hand, are to declare in an audible and solemn manner to the following effect: the man first—viz.—  
“ Friends, in the presence of the Lord, and  
“ before this assembly, I take this my friend  
“ D. E. to be my wife; promising, with divine  
“ assistance, to be unto her a loving and faithful  
“ husband, until death shall separate us:” and then the woman in like manner: “ Friends, in  
“ the presence of the Lord, and before this as-  
“ sembly, I take this my friend A. B. to be my  
“ husband; promising, with divine assistance, to  
“ be unto him a loving and faithful wife, until  
“ death shall separate us.”

The marriage certificate is then to be audibly read by some proper person, the express names and description of the parties being first inserted. They are then to sign the same: the man first, then the woman, with the assumed name of her

husband: the relatives next as witnesses, and such others present as are disposed to subscribe their names.

It is further directed, that the said marriage be accomplished decently, gravely, and weightily; and that the parties themselves, their parents and others concerned, do take care at the houses or places where they go, after the solemnization is over, that no reproach arise, or occasion of offence be given, by any intemperate or immoderate feasting or drinking, or by any unseemly, wanton, or rude discourses or actions; but that all behave with such sobriety as becomes a people fearing God; and that the company retire to their homes in seasonable time. And if any thing to the contrary be observed, the overseers, or other concerned Friends present, ought, as speedily as they conveniently can, to take such aside who make any breach upon good order, and in an affectionate manner admonish them to a better behaviour; and the said overseers are to make report to the next Monthly Meeting, whether good order has been observed, and take care that the marriage certificate be returned in order to be recorded.

The form of which certificate shall be as follows:

Whereas, A. B. of \_\_\_\_\_, in the county of \_\_\_\_\_, in \_\_\_\_\_, son of C. B. of \_\_\_\_\_, and

H. his wife; and D. E. daughter of F. E. of \_\_\_\_\_ and M. his wife, having declared their intentions of marriage with each other, before a Monthly Meeting of the religious society of Friends, held at \_\_\_\_\_ according to the good order used among them (where the parties are under the care of parents or guardians, unless in the case of unreasonable objections, add) and having consent of parents or guardians concerned (as the case may be) their said proposal of marriage was allowed of by said meeting. Now these are to certify whom it may concern, that for the full accomplishment of their said intentions, this \_\_\_\_\_ day of the \_\_\_\_\_ month, in the year of our Lord \_\_\_\_\_, they, the said A. B. and D. E. appeared in a public meeting of the said people held at \_\_\_\_\_ aforesaid; and the said A. B. taking the said D. E. by the hand, did openly declare, that he took her, the said D. E. to be his wife, promising, with divine assistance, to be unto her a loving and faithful husband until death should separate them: and then, in the same assembly, the said D. E. did in like manner declare, that she took him, the said A. B. to be her husband, promising, with divine assistance, to be unto him a loving and faithful wife, until death should separate them. And moreover, they, the said A. B. and D. E. (she according to the custom of marriage, assuming the name of her hus-

band) did, as a further confirmation thereof, then and there to these presents set their hands.

A. B.

D. B.

And we whose names are also hereunto subscribed, being present at the solemnization of the said marriage and subscription, have, as witnesses thereto, set our hands the day and the year above written.

That the marriages of persons too nearly related may, as much as in us lies, be prevented, it is the conclusion of the Yearly Meeting that no marriage between any so near as first-cousins, nor the children of half brothers or half sisters, shall be permitted among us; and that where any person or persons so circumstanced shall intermarry, their so doing shall be considered as a relinquishment of their connexion with society, and they are to be accordingly disowned by the Monthly Meetings of which they are members. And if such should afterwards request to be united to the society, Monthly Meetings ought to be fully satisfied that they are brought to a due sense of their transgression, manifested by a conduct circumspect and consistent with our profession, before they are again received into membership. Yet, let neither their example, nor the clemency of Monthly Meetings towards them, encourage others to the same weakness. But let

us manifest that we are brought to that spiritual dispensation which gives dominion over the affections, and leads to those marriages which are more natural and of better report.

It is further recommended, that parents exercise a religious care in watching over their children, and endeavour to guard them against improper or unequal connexions in marriage; that they be not anxious to obtain for them large portions and settlements, but that they be joined with persons of religious inclinations, suitable dispositions, and diligence in their business; which are necessary to a comfortable life in a married state.

The increase of the breaches of our testimony, in going from amongst us in the weighty engagement of marriage, being, we fear, often for want of due care in parents, and those who have the important charge of educating youth, early to admonish and instruct them in the principles of truth, and impress their minds with the duty of religiously observing them; as much as possible restraining them from such company as will be likely to entangle their affections improperly; we therefore tenderly exhort Friends in all quarters to encrease their care over the youth, that the consistency of our principles in all respects with the nature of true religion, may be impressed on their tender minds, by upright examples, as well

as by precepts ; and that where there is apparent danger of the affections of any being improperly entangled, and the care of parents or guardians, or those who have the oversight of them, appears not sufficient to prevent their taking imprudent steps in the accomplishment of marriage, care be taken, timely, to apply for the assistance of their Friends.

Marriage being a divine ordinance, and a solemn engagement for term of life, is of great importance to our peace, and well-being in this world, and may also prove of no small consequence respecting our state in that which is to come ; yet it is often too inconsiderately entered into, and upon motives inconsistent with the evident intention of that unerring wisdom by which it was primarily ordained ; which was for the mutual assistance and comfort of both sexes, in spirituals and temporals, that their endeavours might be united for the education of their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord ; and for the discharge of their duty in their various allotments in the world.

Marriage implies union, as well in spiritual as temporal concerns. Whilst the parties differ in religion, they stand disunited in the main point ; even that which should increase and confirm their mutual happiness, and render them meet-helps and blessings to each other. Where it is other-

wise, the reciprocal obligation, into which they have entered, becomes their burden; and the more so, as it may not be of a short duration. Whatever felicity they might have flattered themselves with in the beginning, they have found themselves disappointed of, by the daily uneasiness accompanying their minds, and imbibiting their enjoyments.

The perplexed situation of the offspring of such alliances is also to be lamented; attached by nature to both parents, their confusion often renders them unfixed in principle and unsettled in practice; or if, as is usual, the sons attach themselves to the father, and the daughters to the mother, brothers and sisters are trained up in lines of conduct diverse from, and in some instances opposite to each other; thus differing in principle, they are frequently divided in affection, and though so nearly related, are sometimes at the greatest distance from that love and harmony which ought continually to subsist between them.

To prevent falling into these disagreeable and disorderly engagements, it is requisite to beware of the paths that lead to them—the sordid interests and ensnaring friendships of the world, the contaminating pleasures and idle pastimes of earthly minds; also the various solicitations and incentives of festivity and dissipation. Let our dear youth likewise avoid the too frequent and

too familiar converse with those from whom may arise a danger of entanglement, by their alluring the passions and drawing the affections after them.

For want of due watchfulness and obedience to the convictions of divine grace in their consciences, many amongst us have wounded their own souls, distressed their friends, injured their families, and done great disservice to the church, by their unequal connexions ; which have proved an inlet to much degeneracy, and mournfully affected the minds of those who labour under a living concern for the good of all and the prosperity of truth upon earth.

In relation, therefore, to this interesting testimony, it is the affectionate desire of the Yearly Meeting, that where there is occasion to apprehend that any of our members are likely to join in marriage with those who are not in membership with us ; or that any are about to depart from our deliberate, fair and honourable order of marriage, by which that right which belongs to society to investigate the clearness of the parties, relative to the consent of their parents, or guardians, as also the further necessary enquiry, how far such individuals are clear of other marriage engagements, and of all clandestine proceedings whatever, together with that particular and religious

mode of accomplishing marriage, established by us, under the influence of divine wisdom, are wholly avoided and disregarded. That elders, overseers, and other religiously concerned Friends, considering it as a duty, be engaged to take solid opportunities for advising and admonishing them against such procedure (at least two Friends uniting in such service) after which, if the party or parties so precautioned shall, notwithstanding, depart from our well known and established order, such step is to be considered by Monthly Meetings as a relinquishment of their right of membership with the society, and they are to be accordingly testified against. In all cases where the above religious care has not been previously extended, Monthly Meetings should deal with such, as in other cases of offence, and if not brought to acknowledge and condemn their misconduct, they are to be disowned.

And if any parents or guardians consent to, or promote the marriages of their children and those under their care, (members of society) contrary to our established order; if after brotherly labour has been extended to them, they cannot be brought to a due sense of their error, and to make a satisfactory acknowledgment for the same, Monthly Meetings are authorised to issue testimonies of denial against them.

## MEETING HOUSES.

Quarterly and Monthly Meetings are directed to make timely and careful inspection into the situation of the titles of meeting houses, and burial grounds; and other estates which have been vested in trustees, and by them held for the use and benefit of the society at large, or of any of those meetings; so that if it should appear needful, by the death of any such trustees, or otherwise, due and seasonable care may be taken to appoint some others to the trust; that future difficulties, and the risk of being deprived of such estates may be avoided. And it is further directed, that Quarterly and Monthly Meetings respectively, as the case may require, keep exact records of all such trusts and conveyances, and also that a clear and regular account be kept by each respective meeting, of the place where, and the persons with whom, the papers, minutes, and records belonging to our religious society, are from time to time deposited; wherein due care should be taken to lodge them with suitable Friends.

## MEETING FOR SUFFERINGS.

In order that the Yearly Meeting, with its several branches, might be properly represented, during the recess thereof, a meeting was instituted in the year 1778, by the name of the "*Meeting for Sufferings*;" which, by a subsequent regula-

tion, is to consist of twenty Friends, appointed by the Yearly Meeting, and four Friends appointed by each of the Quarterly Meetings; who are to meet at Baltimore, on the Seventh days preceding Baltimore Quarterly Meetings, at the third hour in the afternoon; but the said meeting is privileged to sit on its own adjournments, or to call a special meeting whenever four members shall judge it necessary; and is to be subject to the following rules:

- I. The said meeting shall keep fair minutes of all its proceedings, and annually lay them before the Yearly Meeting.
- II. No less number than twelve of the members attending, shall constitute a meeting, capable of transacting business.
- III. On all occasions of uncommon importance, previous notice thereof shall be given or sent to all the members, if practicable.
- IV. In case the decease of any member, or members, appointed either by the Yearly Meeting, or Quarterly Meetings, should not be immediately supplied—or of any declining or greatly neglecting their attendance, the Meeting for Sufferings, are to notify said meeting, or meetings, of such death or delinquency, in order that the places of those may be supplied by new appointments.
- V. The said meeting is not to meddle with

any matter of faith or discipline, which has not been determined by the Yearly Meeting.

The further services confided to the said Meeting for Sufferings are:

I. In general to represent the Yearly Meeting, and to appear on its behalf, in cases where the interest or reputation of our religious society may render it needful.

II. To take the oversight and inspection of all writings proposed to be printed, relative to our religious principles or testimonies; and to promote or suppress the same at their discretion; also to print and distribute any writings already published by the society, or which may be offered for inspection as aforesaid, and approved: and in all cases where expences are incurred, in the execution of the duties assigned them, they are to draw on the treasurer of the Yearly Meeting for such sums as may be necessary.

III. To inspect and ascertain titles to lands, or other estates belonging to any of our meetings; also to attend to the appropriation of charitable legacies and donations; or to give such advice respecting the same as may appear necessary.

IV. To receive from the several Quarterly Meetings their annual accounts of sufferings, and also such memorials concerning deceased Friends, as those meetings may have concurred with: that when examined and approv-

ed, they may be laid before the Yearly Meeting.

V. To extend such advice and assistance, to any individuals under sufferings for our testimonies, as their cases may require; and if necessary, to apply to the government, or persons in authority, on their behalf.

VI. To correspond with such other Meetings for Sufferings, as are or may be established by any other Yearly Meeting of our religious society, on the common concerns of the society.

Approved ministers, and members of any other Meeting for Sufferings, corresponding with this, may also be permitted to attend its sittings, when they are so inclined.

#### MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP.

It is the fervent concern of the Yearly Meeting, to press upon the consideration of our members, the awful duty of pure and spiritual worship. It is not enough that, after the example of our forefathers, we meet together in one place, in outward silence; rejecting those forms and ceremonies which were invented by the wisdom, as well as that worship which is performed only in the will of man; it is not enough that with a commendable diligence, we attend all our religious Meetings; unless also, like them, we wait in

humble reverence for spiritual ability to worship acceptably the Lord of heaven and earth. May we therefore humbly and diligently wait in the spirit of our minds, for the coming of Him who told his disciples, "*without me, ye can do nothing;*" that we may experience the influence of his spirit, to enlighten and quicken the soul to a true sight of its condition; that feeling the spirit of supplication, we may approach the throne of grace, and under a renewed sense of the father's mercy and goodness, may be enabled to offer the tribute of worship and the sacrifice of praise.

This is the important purpose of our assembling together in silence; and though at times there may be amongst us but little instrumental ministry or even none, let not this produce any abatement of diligence in the duty. Instrumental ministry, in the life and power of the gospel, is a great favour to the church; but the distinguishing excellence of the christian dispensation, is the immediate communication with our heavenly Father, through the inward revelation of the Spirit of Christ. May therefore, the deportment of our members, while engaged in this most solemn duty, be such as to demonstrate, that they are earnest in the great duty of waiting upon, and worshipping God, in spirit; that serious and tender hearted enquirers may be encouraged to

come, and partake in our assemblies, of that inward and spiritual refreshment and consolation, which the Lord is graciously pleased to impart to the souls of such as are humbled in his sight, and approach his holy presence with reverence and fear.

It is directed, that, those who come late to meetings, or, when there, fall a-sleep, or are restless, or do not stay in the meeting, but go forth unnecessarily, or otherwise demean themselves unbecoming our holy profession, on these solemn occasions, be tenderly dealt with and seasonably admonished: and that Friends who are exercised in the discipline, pay early attention, in the love of the gospel, to such as neglect their duty in attending our meetings for worship. A wilful neglect in this important duty, being a manifest evidence of ingratitude to the Divine Author of all our mercies, and contrary to the practice of the primitive believers in Christ, and our religious testimony—it is the judgment of the Yearly Meeting, that Monthly Meetings, after having fully discharged their duty towards such, and finding their endeavours to reclaim them ineffectual, should testify our disunity with them.

It is further directed, that Friends keep their children, and such (members) as are under their care, to a constant, seasonable, and orderly atten-

dance of meetings, both on First days, and on other days of the week; instructing them agreeably to the ability received, to wait in stillness upon the Lord, that they may receive a portion of his spiritual favour, and from the tendering virtue of his Holy Spirit, may be engaged, in heart and mind, to walk worthy of so great grace, and in a holy zeal for his honour, submit to bear the cross, endure the shame, and become dedicated witnesses for him among men.

As the appearance of drowsiness, in our religious meetings is offensive, and may be a cause of stumbling to such sober enquirers as come among us, Friends are earnestly exhorted to strive against it, that no appearance thereof may be seen in our assemblies; and if any give way to it, (as indulgence therein, must necessarily have a disqualifying influence) it is the desire of the Yearly Meeting, that Quarterly, Monthly, and other meetings, be cautious of employing such members, in the weighty services of discipline.

## MEMORIALS.

To commemorate the lives of the righteous, is a tribute due to their memory: and may prove an incentive to the living to follow after their virtues. If, therefore, any Monthly Meeting

should, upon solid consideration, believe that it would be profitable to prepare a memorial concerning a deceased member, such memorial is to be sent to the respective Quarterly Meeting, where it is to be further considered; and if approved, is from thence to be forwarded to the Meeting for Sufferings, in order for inspection and approbation, previous to its being laid before the Yearly Meeting.

It is also required, that Quarterly and Monthly Meetings furnish the Yearly Meeting, annually, with an account of the decease of such of their members, in the station of ministers or elders, as have occurred within the year.

MINISTERS AND ELDERS,  
AND  
MEETINGS OF MINISTERS AND ELDERS.

Persuaded as we are, that gospel ministry is not of man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ, agreeably to that apostolical charge—" As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God: if any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified." I Peter, iv.—10, 11. Holding it therefore to be a doctrine truly christian, that

the Spirit of God is the foundation of all true knowledge in relation to that duty which we owe to Him, and one to another, we earnestly exhort, that those amongst us who apprehend that they are called to the ministry of the gospel, may in their public services especially, attend closely to their several and peculiar gifts, waiting for that divine ability by which they may faithfully and availingly minister the word.

We also desire, with earnest solicitude, that those who are placed in the very important department of elders in the church, may evince a correspondent qualification rightly to judge of the ministry, and manifest a concern for the support of our religious testimonies, and the preservation of our discipline, as well as for the advancement of truth and righteousness; such as these being clothed with christian meekness, and wisdom, may even rebuke with authority, and therein will realize that description given by the royal Psalmist,—“ Let the righteous “ smite me; it shall be a kindness; and let him “ reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil.” Psal. cxli.—5.

Ministers and elders thus united, become mutually useful to each other; and are as nursing fathers and mothers in the church; particularly to those who are young in the ministry: for this class we earnestly desire, that they may with all care

and diligence be advised and admonished; and, if occasion appear, reproved in a tender and christian spirit; let them also be exhorted frequently to read the holy scriptures, and earnestly to seek the mind of the spirit of truth, to open the mysteries contained in them. Ministers thus abiding in a simple and patient submission to the will of God, and keeping down to the openings of divine life in themselves, may witness a growth in their gifts, and will also be preserved from extending their declarations further than they find the power of truth to accompany them.

If any in the course of their ministry, shall misapply, or draw unsound inferences, or wrong conclusions from the text, or shall misbehave themselves in point of conduct or conversation, let them be admonished in love and tenderness, by the elders or overseers where they live; and if they prove refractory and refuse to acknowledge their faults, they must be further dealt with, in the wisdom of truth, as the case may require.

As the occasion of our religious meetings is solemn, a care should be maintained to guard against any thing that would tend to disorder or confusion therein; when any think they have aught against what is publicly delivered, they should speak to the party privately; and if any

shall oppose a minister in his or her preaching or exhortation; or keep on the hat, or shew any remarkable dislike to such when engaged in prayer, let them be speedily admonished in such manner as may be requisite, unless the ministry of the person against whom the uneasiness is expressed, has been disapproved by the Monthly Meeting.

Every Monthly Meeting is to select two or more Friends of each sex to sit with the ministers, and they together are to compose a meeting to be denominated a Preparative Meeting of Ministers and Elders; care should be taken, that those chosen for this service, be prudent, solid Friends, and that they duly discharge the trust confided to them.

When there is occasion for the appointment of one or more elders in any meeting, a committee to consider the subject should be first appointed in a Monthly Meeting; and in this committee, the names of the persons who may be thought suitable, should be first mentioned, and, when concurred with, reported to the Monthly Meeting, without consulting the person or persons, or otherwise divulging it. If upon due consideration, the nomination is approved, a minute should be made expressive thereof, and a copy forwarded to the Quarterly Meeting of Ministers and Elders. Where the nomination being weighed,

and the sense of the Monthly Meeting concurred with, or otherwise, information thereof should be given to the Preparative Meeting of Ministers and Elders, which should inform said Monthly Meeting of the judgment of the Quarterly Meeting of Ministers and Elders.

It is the order of society, that when any Friend, appointed to the station of an elder, believes him or herself called to the ministry, and shall have appeared frequently in that capacity in our public religious meetings, that such should withdraw from the meetings of ministers and elders: one of the particular objects of their appointment being thereby nullified.

When any Friend has frequently appeared in our religious meetings as a minister, and the Preparative Meeting of Ministers and Elders apprehends that it is seasonable the subject should claim the attention of the Monthly Meeting for Discipline, of which the person is a member, they are at liberty to mention the matter therein; and if the Monthly Meeting, after deliberate consideration, should unite in believing that a gift in the ministry has been committed to him or her, a minute expressive thereof should be forwarded to the Quarterly Meeting of Ministers and Elders, where, the case being solidly weighed, and the sense of the Monthly Meeting concurred with, information thereof should be furnished to

the Preparative Meeting of Ministers and Elders, of which the party is a member. Which meeting should inform the Monthly Meeting, to which such Friend belongs, of the judgment of the Quarterly Meeting of Ministers and Elders therein. And until the approbation of the Quarterly Meeting of Ministers and Elders is obtained, no such Friend is to be received as a minister, nor permitted to sit in the Meetings of Ministers and Elders, nor allowed to travel abroad as a minister.

When any approved minister apprehends it to be a duty to travel in the service of truth, beyond the limits of their Quarterly Meeting, he or she is to open their concern in the Monthly Meeting to which they belong, and obtain a certificate or minute (as the occasion may be) of its unity and concurrence, directed to Friends within the parts proposed to be visited: and it is required, that when the service is accomplished, the said meeting be informed thereof, and the certificate returned without unnecessary delay.

No minister is to appoint a meeting beyond the limits of the Quarterly Meeting to which he or she belongs, without the concurrence of their respective Monthly Meetings. And if a minister is concerned to appoint a meeting within the verge of the Quarter, if to wait for the approbation of the Monthly Meeting appears to interfere with the proper time for appointing such meeting, the

united sense of the elders of the Monthly Meeting of which he or she is a member, or of those of the Monthly Meeting within the compass of which such appointment is proposed, may be accepted as sufficient privilege.

When any minister is religiously concerned to make a general visit to the meetings of Friends, either within or beyond the limits of the Yearly Meeting, and has obtained a certificate for that purpose from the Monthly Meeting of which he or she is a member, the certificate must also be laid before the respective Quarterly Meeting: and if the concern is concurred with, an indorsement must be entered upon the certificate, and signed, if for a man, by the clerk of the Men's Meeting only; but if for a woman, by the clerks of the Men's and Women's Meetings.

The ministers and elders of each Monthly Meeting are required to meet once in three months, at such time and place as the Monthly Meeting may direct, in the capacity of a Preparative Meeting of Ministers and Elders; when, after a time of solid retirement, the queries addressed to such meetings are to be read and considered, and distinct answers made to them in writing; which, when signed by the clerk, are to be conveyed to the ensuing Quarterly Meeting of Ministers and Elders, by two or more Friends to be mentioned in the report, as repre-

sentatives: here also, if, in the course of enquiry, any deficiency has appeared, care should be taken that it be remedied.

And in the Quarterly Meetings the same queries are also to be read, together with the answers which are brought from their Preparative Meetings. In these meetings the state of the members is to be weightily considered, that where occasion requires it, advice and counsel may be seasonably extended; and once in the year those answers comprised in a written report and signed by the clerk, are to be forwarded to the Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders, by four or more Friends appointed as representatives: in this meeting the queries are also to be read, with the answers from the several Quarters, and the state of this part of the society being collected and considered, advices adapted thereto, may, if requisite, be issued to the subordinate Select Meetings. Here all such ministers as apprehend they are required to go in truth's service beyond sea, after obtaining a certificate of the concurrence of the Monthly Meeting, indorsed by the respective Quarter, are to communicate their prospects of duty relative thereto, and produce the said certificates; and if upon solid consideration, the same are united with by the said Meeting of Ministers and Elders, a certif-

cate thereof, signed by the clerk, should be granted.

None of the said Meetings of Ministers and Elders are in any wise to interfere with the business of any Meeting for Discipline; nor is the Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders to suffer its adjournments to interfere with the sittings of the Yearly Meeting for Discipline.

And finally, if any acknowledged member of our Meetings of Ministers and Elders shall at any time be thought, by negligence, unfaithfulness, or otherwise, to have lost his or her service in that station, so as to become burthensome and the subject of uneasiness, (yet not so as to be under the care of a Meeting of Discipline on that account, or for misconduct) it is advised, that a timely and tender care be extended to such person, according to gospel order; first by the individuals concerned, and then by the Preparative Meeting of Ministers and Elders to which he or she may belong: should these labours prove unavailing, report of the case should be made by that meeting to the Quarterly Meeting of Ministers and Elders, where a few Friends should be deputed to assist the said Preparative Meeting in a further extension of labour with the party: if this also prove unavailing, and on report thereof to the said Quarterly Meeting, it appears that the said Preparative Meeting has fully discharged its

duty to the individual, the case should then be transmitted to the Monthly Meeting for Discipline of which the party is a member, and left under its care, and he or she ought from that time to refrain from attending any such meetings, until they shall be again recommended or appointed as at first.

### MODERATION AND TEMPERANCE.

It is a consideration claiming our serious regard, that our worthy ancestors, having their views directed towards an enduring inheritance, and their affections established upon things above, sought not after the splendour of this world. In minds thus bent upon seeking a more glorious inheritance than temporals can afford, the love of this world had but little influence ; they were conspicuous examples of temperance and moderation. A defection from this simplicity of heart and heavenly mindedness, leading into the inordinate love and pursuit of the things of this world, hath prevailed with too many amongst us, and produced the fruits of pride and ambition. These have introduced many imaginary wants, from which our ancestors were preserved by their simplicity. To satisfy these wants, some have been excited to enter into a larger extension of trade and commerce than they had stock and ability to conduct. Vain ambition, and an emulation inconsistent

with the truth, have led many into extravagant expences. Reduced by these means in their circumstances, yet unwilling to lessen their appearance in the world, some have resorted to indirect methods to procure a temporary support, which have too frequently ended in failures and bankruptcies.

Whilst, therefore, we hold it to be an indubitable truth, that moderation and temperance are inseparable from the christian religion, we affectionately beseech our members to abstain from all appearance of evil in relation thereto. And particularly as respects the unnecessary use of intoxicating liquors of every description. Is it not affectingly to be observed, that a baneful excess in drinking spiritous liquors is prevalent amongst many of the inhabitants of our land ; how evident are the corrupting, debasing, and ruinous effects consequent upon the importation, distilation, and retailing of them, whereby intemperance is greatly aided and encouraged, to the impoverishment of many, distempering the constitutions and understandings of many more, and increasing vice and dissoluteness in the land, with which many religiously attentive minds have been long painfully exercised.

It is the fervent desire of the Yearly Meeting, that Friends in all quarters may be earnestly excited to suffer the affecting importance of this evil, religiously to impress their minds, that our

lights (in relation thereto) may shine before men; and assuredly they will shine more abundantly, as we are concerned to watch carefully over ourselves, attended with a prudent and religious zeal against the encouragement, either directly or indirectly, of the unnecessary use of all intoxicating liquors. And however a medicinal quality may remain to be urged, in favour of the use of spirituous liquors, yet we believe it to be incumbent on all, both by example and affectionate entreaty, to caution and dissuade all our members, against either the importation, distillation, or vending of them, or giving countenance thereto; more especially as it regards that perversion of the blessing of heaven, attendant upon the distillation of grain; which, besides other evil consequences, has the effect to enhance the price of bread to the poor.

### NEGROES AND SLAVES.

As a religious society, we have found it to be our indispensable duty to declare to the world, our belief of the repugnancy of slavery to the christian religion. It therefore remains to be our continued concern, to prohibit our members from holding in bondage our fellow-men. And at the present time we apprehend it to be incumbent on every individual, deeply to consider

his own particular share in this testimony. The slow progress in the emancipation of this part of the human family, we lament; but nevertheless, do not despair of their ultimate enlargement. And we desire that Friends may not suffer the deplorable condition of these our enslaved fellow-beings, to lose its force upon their minds, through the delay which the opposition of interested men, may occasion in this work of justice and mercy; but rather be animated to consider, that the longer the opposition remains, the greater is the necessity, on the side of righteousness and benevolence, for our steady perseverance in pleading their cause.

Let us also, amidst our sympathy for the sufferers, not forget to cultivate those sensations, which direct the mind in pity towards the deplorable state of such men, whether in foreign countries or our own, as promote, procure and execute, the tearing away of the Africans from their native land, as well as for those who detain them in bondage; remembering, that they are men equally interested with us, in the rewards of futurity. Believing, therefore, as we do, that a just and dreadful retribution awaits the unrepenting and obdurate oppressor, at that awful tribunal, where sophistry will not prevail to exculpate; let us seek for, and cherish, that disposition of mind, which can pray for these

enemies of humanity, and fervently breathe for their restoration to soundness of judgment, and purity of principle.

In relation to this oppressed people, we earnestly desire, that such of them as may be under the care of any of our members, may be treated with kindness, and as objects of the common salvation instructed in the principles of the christian religion, as well as in such branches of school-learning as may fit them for freedom, and to become useful members of civil society. Also, that Friends in their respective neighbourhoods, advise and assist such of them as are at liberty, in the education of their children, and common worldly concerns.

If any in membership with us, should hire slaves to assist them in their business, it is the judgment of the Yearly Meeting, that in so doing, such promote the unrighteous traffic, and oppose our testimony against slavery. And where they cannot be prevailed upon to desist therefrom, Monthly Meetings are at liberty to declare their disunity with them.

If any of our members should purchase slaves, to be liberated after a term of years, however they may be induced thereto, from an apparent motive of contributing to the cause of humanity; yet it is the judgment of the Yearly Meeting, that it is a practice which ought to be discour-

raged ; believing that upon due reflection it will be found, that those do not support a faithful testimony against slavery.

We believe also, that a proper regard to this testimony, would lead our members to avoid acting as executors or administrators, to estates where slaves are bequeathed, or being accessory to any step whereby their bondage may be prolonged.

The situation of those black people who have been held as slaves, by any of us or our predecessors, calls for our serious examination and enquiry, how far we are clear of withholding from them what, under such an exercise, may be opened to our view as their just right; and we earnestly and affectionately intreat those in particular, who have released any of them, to attend to the further manifestations of duty. Even if no such obligations to this people existed amongst us, it is worthy of our consideration, whether any object of beneficence is more deserving of our regard, than that of training up their youth in such virtuous principles and habits, as may render them useful and respectable members of the community.

And further, it is the conclusion of the Yearly Meeting, that if any of our members are concerned in importing, selling, or purchasing ; or shall give away, or transfer, any negro or other

slave, with or without any other consideration than to clear their estate of future incumbrance, or in such manner that their bondage is continued beyond the time limited by law or custom for white persons; and also, if any shall accept of such gift or assignment; they ought to be speedily treated with in the spirit of love and wisdom, in order to convince them of the iniquity of their conduct; and if, after christian labour, they cannot be brought to such a sense of their injustice, as to do whatever the Monthly Meeting shall judge to be necessary, for the restoration of such slave to his or her natural and just liberty, and condemn their deviation from the law of righteousness and equity, to the satisfaction of the said meeting, such ought to be testified against, as other transgressors are, for immoral, unjust, and reproachful conduct.

## OATHS.

Our testimony against the imposition of oaths is founded upon the following express and positive command of the Author of the christian religion—viz.—“ Ye have heard, that it hath been said by them of old time, thou shalt not forswear thyself; but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths; but I say unto you, swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is God’s throne;

nor by the earth, for it is his footstool ; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King : neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black : but let your communication be yea, yea, nay, nay ; for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil." Mat. v.—33 to 37.

This testimony we also find was clearly held up, and emphatically enjoined, by the apostle James, upon his christian brethren—" But above all things, my brethren," says he, " swear not; neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath; but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay ; lest ye fall into condemnation." Jas. v.—12.

Believing therefore, as we do, that no argument can invalidate a prohibition thus clear and positive, we are bound religiously to regard it; and whilst we feel gratitude to our rulers for the continuance of that indulgence, by which our affirmation is accepted, let us evince our sincerity in relation to this testimony, by faithfully maintaining it.

And when any of our members, either in courts or elsewhere, violate it, either by taking or administering oaths, Monthly Meetings are desired to extend brotherly labour towards them ; and if they cannot be prevailed upon to give the

necessary satisfaction, to testify their disunity with them.

We also believe, that a proper regard to the obligations of this testimony, would lead our members to endeavour to procure such persons as witnesses to instruments of writing, rendering them necessary, as will attest them by affirmation.

### OVERSEERS.

It is the recommendation and desire of the Yearly Meeting, as productive of very beneficial consequences to society, that in every Monthly Meeting a proper number of faithful and judicious Friends, belonging to each of the Particular or Preparative Meetings, be appointed to the station of overseers within the same ; whose duty it is, to exercise a vigilant and tender care over their fellow members ; that if any thing repugnant to the harmony and good order of the society appears amongst them, it may be timely attended to. And to prevent the introduction of all unnecessary and premature complaints to meetings of business, it is advised, that if any member shall have cause of complaint against another, it be mentioned to the overseers ; who are to see that the party complained of has been treated with, according to gospel order, previously to the case being reported to the Preparative

or Monthly Meeting. And it is desired, that in dealing with any, it be done in the spirit of meekness and love, patiently endeavouring to instruct and advise them ; which, if ineffectual, the Preparative Meeting should be informed thereof ; that, if needful, the case may be laid before the Monthly Meeting ; of which notice should be given to the party, when it can be conveniently done.

It is further recommended to our Monthly Meetings, that a committee be appointed at least once in three years, or as much oftener as the occasion may require, to consider the propriety of changing the overseers, and bringing forward, to the improvement of their gifts, other Friends, on whom a concern for the welfare of the society rests. And we tenderly exhort all our members, who may be rightly called into this, or any other service of the church, not hastily to excuse themselves therefrom, but solidly to consider the weighty advice of the apostle,

“ Feed the flock of God, which is amongst you ;  
“ taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint,  
“ but willingly ; not for filthy lucre, but of a  
“ ready mind ; neither as lords over God’s heri-  
“ tage ; but being ensamples to the flock ; and  
“ when the chief shepherd shall appear, ye  
“ shall receive a crown of glory, that fadeth not  
“ away.”

## PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

As next to our own souls, our offspring are the very immediate objects of our care and concern, we intreat all who are parents and governors of families, that they lay to heart the great and lasting importance to the youth, of a religious education. This would lead them to be solicitous, that their tender and susceptible minds may be impressed with virtuous principles, and a just sense of the Divine Being, his wisdom, goodness, power and omnipresence. They would be concerned to impress them with just sentiments in relation to the vanity and fallacy of transitory enjoyments, directing them to seek after that solid peace and serenity of mind attendant upon true religion, as the pearl of great price.

The importance of an early instruction in the law of God, is set forth with peculiar strength, clearness and solemnity, in Deut. vi. 4, &c.—

“ Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord,  
“ and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with  
“ all thine heart and with all thy soul  
“ and with all thy might; and these words  
“ which I command thee this day shall be  
“ in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them dili-  
“ gently unto thy children, and shalt talk of  
“ them when thou sittest in thine house, and  
“ when thou walkest by the way, and when

“ thou liest down, and when thou risest up.” We know, that virtue does not descend by lineal succession, nor piety by inheritance ; yet we trust, that the Almighty graciously regards the sincere endeavours of those parents, whose early and unremitting care is over their offspring for good. Be ye therefore examples to them in your meetings, your families, and employments. Keep them while young out of the vain fashions, the corrupt customs, and unprofitable conversation of the world ; labouring to convince their young and tender minds, of the propriety of restraint, when necessary ; exhorting them in meekness, and commanding in wisdom. And, as they advance in age, guard them against the reading of plays, romances, and other licentious publications, of a nature prejudicial to the promotion of christianity ; likewise against public pastimes and pernicious diversions ; all which have a tendency to draw the incautious mind from a sense of religious duty, to bring it into a state of alienation from the Divine life, and to deprive it of that inexpressible comfort and delight, attendant upon the daily exercise of religion and virtue.

In much love to the rising generation, we exhort them to avoid the many vanities and ensnaring corruptions to which they are exposed. Bear in mind, dear youth, that “ the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” Take the advice

of godly parents, guardians and friends ; ever remembering that children ought to obey their parents in the Lord, and that disobedience therein is a breach of the moral law, and was always offensive in the divine sight.

With tender solicitude we press it upon you, flee from every thing which may have a tendency to despoil your innocence, and to render your minds less receptive of that holy influence which your enlightened judgment demonstrates to be truth. We beseech you, attend to this heavenly instructor, and dutifully yield to the correspondent tender advice of your friends. Shrink not from the cross of Christ, in your garb, language or manners; but through a subjection of your wills to the divine will ; in these, and all other respects, walk answerably to the purity of our profession and the simplicity and spirituality of our worship ; so may you be instructive examples to serious enquirers after truth ; and not of those who, under a profession thereof are preferring their own evil ways and turning others aside from the footsteps of its followers.

And when the pious exercise of parental care and authority is disregarded, and any of our youth departing from that simplicity correspondent with our profession, have obstinately run into, and copied after the vain and extravagant fashions of the world, in their dress and address,

and have also exposed themselves to the corrupting influence of evil company, and a consequent irregularity of conduct, such ought to be timely and tenderly expostulated with, to convince them of the dangerous tendency of their conduct; and if they cannot be prevailed on to amend their ways, they ought to be dealt with by their respective Preparative or Monthly Meetings, as in other cases of offence; and if, after due labour and forbearance, they prove irreclaimable, they may be testified against.

And if any parents in membership with us willingly indulge their children, or youth under their care, in such extravagance and excesses, as are here pointed out, and persist in vindicating their conduct, they ought in like manner to be treated with and disowned. It is the desire of the Yearly Meeting, that Friends may bring up the youth under their care to habits of industry, placing them with sober and exemplary members of the society for instruction, in such occupations as are consistent with our religious principles and testimonies; so that, as far as in us lies, they may be preserved in a becoming conduct and demeanour. Also, that those whose circumstances may furnish them with ability for instructing in useful and suitable employments, the children of members who are in situations less affluent, may receive them into their families upon terms so moderate

and equitable as to remove every plausible reason for placing them with those not in membership with us.

#### PLAINNESS IN DRESS AND ADDRESS.

Upon the first of these subjects, our principle is, to let decency, simplicity and utility, be our principal motives, and not to conform to the vain and changeable fashions of the world, though we may occasionally adopt alterations which appear convenient or useful. This is a principle, the propriety of which we apprehend no serious christian will deny; and whilst in ages of pride and extravagance in dress, the adoption of this rule may make us appear singular; yet, in relation to us, this singularity is not without its use. It is in some respects like a hedge about us; which, though it does not make the ground it incloses rich and fruitful, yet it frequently prevents those intrusions, by which the labour of the husbandman is injured or destroyed.

The conduct which our society has adopted in this respect, is supported by many passages in holy writ. "Be not conformed to this world; " but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind," was the advice of the apostle to the christians who dwelt at the seat of Roman grandeur and luxury. And again, in relation to the

female sex, "I will," says he, "that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shame-facedness and sobriety; not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but which becometh women professing godliness, with good works; plainly shewing that such adornings are contrary to the profession of godliness." The apostle Peter also is very full in his exhortations upon this subject: "Whose adorning," saith he, "let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price; for after this manner in old time, the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves;" plainly intimating, that those of old who were holy and trusted in God, placed not their delight in such outward decorations.

It is, however, highly important to us, to maintain more than the form of godliness, and whilst we avoid a conformity to this world, to be careful to seek after that divine power which will enable us to fulfil the other part of the exhortation: "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." Thus, having our minds and conduct rightly re-

gulated, we shall fulfil another important apostolic injunction: "Let not your good be evil spoken of."

In our address also, we are bound to differ from the world in several respects; such as our using the singular number in speaking to a single person; our disuse of the appellation of Master, Mistress, &c. in a complimentary manner, to those who do not stand in these relations to us, and our calling the months and days of the week by their numerical names, instead of those which are derived from the heathen deities, &c. From these, and other erroneous and corrupt practices, the spirit of truth, in which we profess to believe, as guiding into all truth, led our predecessors in religious profession; and we believe, still leads us as we faithfully follow it. Our conduct in these respects is supported by the practices mentioned in holy writ, as well as by the simplicity and reasonableness of it.

The origin of applying the plural number to an individual, and of giving complimentary titles to one another, is to be traced to vanity and pride. Besides this consideration, our practice of using the singular number to a single person, is both more correct and more conspicuous, to say nothing of its consistency with that form of sound words recommended by Paul to Timothy. This is also the case with respect to our names

of days and months; nevertheless, it is not by reason and propriety alone, that our conduct in these things may be supported. Religion, if an attention to the practice and precepts recorded in the scriptures, has a claim to that name, also justifies our conduct. It was no doubt in allusion to the complimentary, and not to the proper use of the appellations of Rabbi, Father, and Master, that our Lord prohibited the practice amongst his followers. Speaking of the disposition of the Scribes and Pharisees, he says, “they “love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the “chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in “the markets; and to be called of men Rabbi, “Rabbi: But be not ye called of men Rabbi; “for one is your master, even Christ, and all ye “are brethren: and call no man your father, up- “on the earth; for one is your father, which is “in heaven: neither be ye called masters; for “one is your master, even Christ.” The following expressions of Elihu, a pious young man, mentioned in the book of Job, are also applicable: “Let me not, I pray you, accept any “man’s person; neither let me give flattering ti- “tles unto man; for I know not to give flatter- “ing titles; in so doing my maker would soon “take me away.”

Also, to give the names of heathen deities, &c. to days and months, we apprehend is not only

inconsistent with the "form of sound words," just mentioned; but is contrary to the spirit of the injunction given to the Israelites, as a preservative from contaminating themselves with idolatry. "In all things that I have said unto "you, be circumspect; and make no mention of "the name of other Gods; neither let it be "heard out of thy mouth." When the reformation of the Jews was foretold by the prophets, these amongst other things were stated as a part: "I will take the names of Balim out of her "mouth: I will turn to the people a pure lan- "guage; and I will cut off the names of the "Idols out of the land, and they shall no more "be remembered."

From religious scruples also, we cannot bow the body and take off the hat, in order to express our respect to man. The reason for this is, that it is a token of reverence enjoined and used in our solemn approaches to the Supreme Being, when exercising the religious duties of preaching or prayer. On this account, and not from any disrespect, we think it right not to confound this solemn act of reverence to the Almighty, with the marks of respect to our fellow-creatures. True civility, and due respect, may be better shown by conduct than by compliment; and we are far from desiring to dismiss those so-

cial duties from our attention and regard in our salutations.

We therefore tenderly exhort all, seriously to consider the plainness and simplicity which the gospel enjoins, and to manifest it in their habit, speech and deportment. A declension herein, we fear, is attended with hurtful consequences, in opening the way of some of our youth more easily and unobservedly, to attend places of public resort, for the exercise of sports, plays and other pernicious diversions, from which truth taught our ancients, and still teaches us, to refrain.

We also tenderly advise, that Friends take heed, especially those who should be exemplary to others under their care, that they exercise plainness of speech, without respect of persons, in all their converse among men; and not balk their testimony by a cowardly compliance, varying their language according to their company; a practice of very ill example, rendering those who use it contemptible, and to be looked upon as a kind of hypocrites, even by those with whom they so comply. This seems to be cautioned against by the apostle, when he advises Timothy "That the deacons be grave, and not "double-tongued; plainly importing, that it is inconsistent with the gravity of the gospel.

## POOR.

As mercy, compassion, and charity, are eminently required by the Gospel, it is the desire of the Yearly Meeting, that the cases of our members who are in indigent circumstances be duly inspected, in order that advice and relief may be seasonably extended, and assistance afforded them, in such business as they are capable of. To defray the expences which their support and the education of their children will necessarily occasion, it is recommended to each Monthly or Preparative Meeting of Men and Women Friends, to be open-hearted, and liberal in subscriptions, for raising and continuing funds for these purposes. And in the exercise of this benevolent care, it is desired, that we may always guard against unnecessarily exposing the names or situations of our fellow-members. Such also, who need pecuniary aid, ought to accept the deliberate advice of their friends, and manifest a becoming disposition to conform to their solid judgment; remembering, that it is said, "in the multitude of counsellors there is safety." Prov. xi. 14.

Where there is an obstinate refusal to conform to such advice, committees are to be governed in the distribution of the intended liberality, by a prudent discretion.

PRIESTS' WAGES,  
OR HIRELING MINISTRY.

Let us keep in remembrance this fundamental principle of our profession, that it is under the immediate teaching and influence of the Holy Spirit, that all acceptable worship is performed, and all gospel ministry supplied ; that this pure and powerful influence, in vessels sanctified and prepared by the Divine hand, is the essential qualification to that work. The gift therefore being divine, the service is freely and faithfully to be discharged, without any view to reward from man, agreeably to the express command of Christ, our head and high-priest ; “freely ye have received, freely give.” Matt. x. 8.

And where any of our members, are so regardless of this testimony, as to contribute to the support of an hireling ministry, and vindicate such conduct, they ought to be tenderly laboured with, to convince them of their error ; but if this prove ineffectual, and they persist in their unfaithfulness, the Monthly Meetings to which they belong, should proceed to declare our disunity with them, such conduct being opposed to our testimony for the free ministry of the gospel, which is “without money, and without price.”

## QUERIES.

In order that the Yearly Meeting may be clearly informed of the state of society, the following Queries are directed to the subordinate meetings: and in desiring answers to them, the design of the Yearly Meeting is, not only to be informed of the due observance of the several branches of our christian testimony; but also, to impress on the minds of our members, a profitable individual examination of themselves, how far they act consistently with their religious profession; and also to excite elders, overseers, and other concerned Friends, to discharge their duty faithfully, in administering counsel and admonition when necessary.

It is concluded, that the following nine queries be read, deliberately considered, and answered in each Preparative and Monthly Meeting, once in the year, in order to convey an explicit account in writing to the Quarterly Meetings next preceding the Yearly Meeting; and from thence an account is to be forwarded to the Yearly Meeting.

Also, that the first, second and ninth of those queries be read, and considered, and explicit written answers be prepared for them in the two Quarterly Meetings preceding the one before mentioned, and also in the Preparative and

Monthly Meetings which report thereto. But none of the queries are to be read, or answered, in those Quarterly Meetings for Discipline which immediately succeed the Yearly Meeting, nor in the Preparative or Monthly Meetings which report to those Quarters.

And further, it is not obligatory on meetings to read any other of the queries than such as are to be answered: Nor is the reading and answering of them enjoined on any Preparative Meeting, where the members of that, and the Monthly Meeting are the same.

**FIRST QUERY.**—Are all meetings for worship and discipline attended? Do Friends avoid unbecoming behaviour therein? And is the hour of meeting observed?

**SECOND.**—Do Friends maintain love towards each other, as becomes our christian profession? Are tale-bearing and detraction discouraged? And when differences arise, are endeavours used speedily to end them.

**THIRD.**—Do Friends endeavour, by example and precept, to educate their children, and those under their care, in plainness of speech, deportment and apparel? Do they guard them against reading pernicious books; and from the corrupt conversation of the world? And are they encouraged frequently to read the holy scriptures?

**FOURTH.**—Are Friends clear of importing,

vending, distilling, or the unnecessary use of spirituous liquors; of frequenting taverns, or attending places of diversion? And do they observe moderation and temperance on all occasions?

**FIFTH.**—Are the necessities of the poor, and the circumstances of those who may appear likely to require aid, inspected and relieved? Are they advised, and assisted, in such employments as they are capable of; and is due care taken to promote the school-education of their children?

**SIXTH.**—Do Friends maintain a faithful testimony against a hireling ministry, oaths, military services, clandestine trade, prize-goods and lotteries?

**SEVENTH.**—Are Friends careful to live within the bounds of their circumstances, and to avoid involving themselves in business beyond their ability to manage? Are they just in their dealings, and punctual in complying with their engagements? And where any give reasonable grounds for fear in these respects, is due care extended to them?

**EIGHTH.** Are Friends careful to bear a testimony against slavery? Do they provide, in a suitable manner, for those under their direction, who have had their freedom secured; and are they instructed in useful learning.

**NINTH.**—Is care taken to deal with offenders

## 96 ANNUAL QUERIES.—GENERAL ADVICES.

seasonably and impartially, and to endeavour to evince to those who will not be reclaimed, the spirit of meekness and love, before judgment is placed upon them?

It is also required that the following queries be read and answered once in the year, in each Monthly and Quarterly Meeting, and a written report thereof forwarded to the Yearly Meeting, by the respective Quarters.

### ANNUAL QUERIES.

**FIRST QUERY.**—What ministers and elders deceased, and when?

**SECOND QUERY.**—What new meetings settled?

**THIRD QUERY.**—Are schools encouraged for education of our youth, under the tuition of teachers in membership with us?

**FOURTH QUERY.**—Are the queries addressed to the Quarterly, Monthly and Preparative Meetings read and answered therein, as directed?

### GENERAL ADVICES.

It is further desired, that in the Preparative and Monthly Meetings, in which all the foregoing queries are read and answered, the following advices may also be read, with a suitable pause between them, as a mean of exciting those present to a consideration, whether there is any oc-

casion for an extension of care in these respects, in relation either to themselves or others.

**FRIENDS ARE ADVISED,**

To observe due moderation in the furniture of their houses, and to avoid superfluity in their manner of living.

To attend to the limitations of truth in their temporal business.

To be careful to place their children amongst Friends ; preferring those whose care and example will be most likely to conduce to their preservation.

To inspect the state of their temporal affairs once in the year, and make their wills whilst in health.

To apply for certificates, when about to remove, and to pay proper attention to those coming from other places, who appear as Friends, without producing certificates.

It is further recommended, that when occasions of uneasiness appear in any, such may be treated with in privacy, and with tenderness, before the matter be communicated to another ; thus, the hands of those concerned in the further exercise of the discipline, will not be weakened by a consciousness on their part, of a departure from the true order of the gospel.

Also, that Friends endeavour to manage the affairs of our meetings in the spirit of meekness and wisdom, with decency, forbearance, and love to each other; labouring to maintain the “unity of spirit in the bond of peace.”

### QUERIES

#### FOR MEETINGS OF MINISTERS AND ELDERS.

The Yearly Meeting requires, that of the following four queries, formed for the use of the Meetings of Ministers and Elders, the first three be read and distinctly answered in writing, three times in the year, by each Preparative Meeting of that kind, to its respective Quarterly Meeting: and that all the said four queries shall be in like manner read and answered, by the Preparative to their Quarterly Meetings, next preceding the Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders: in order, that the Quarterly Meetings may be enabled to transmit a clear and distinct statement of those answers to that meeting.

#### QUERIES FOR MINISTERS AND ELDERS.

I. Are ministers and elders diligent in the attendance of Meetings for Worship and Discipline; and concerned to encourage their families to that religious duty?

II. Are ministers, in the exercise of their

gifts, careful to wait for divine ability, and thereby preserved from being burthensome.

III. Are ministers and elders in unity one with another, and with the meetings to which they belong? manifesting a religious concern for the advancement of truth, and the support of our discipline?

IV. Are ministers and elders good examples in uprightness, temperance, and moderation, and careful to train up their families in plainness of dress, and simplicity of manners, becoming our religious profession.

ADVICES TO MINISTERS AND ELDERS.

It is also desired that the following advices be deliberately read in each subordinate Select Meeting, at least once in the year;

Let all in their testimonies be cautious of using unnecessary preambles, and of asserting too positively a divine impulse; the baptizing power of truth accompanying their words, being the true evidence.

Let all read the holy scriptures frequently, and be careful neither to misquote nor misapply them.

Let ministers be careful how they enter upon disputed points in their testimony; or of making such objections as they do not clearly answer.

Let all be cautious of interrupting the solemnity of meetings, by unnecessary additions towards the conclusion.

Let all be careful not to hurt their service by tones, avoiding all affectation, and those gestures which do not comport with christian gravity.

And lastly, let all dwell in that which gives ability to labour successfully in the church of Christ, adorning the doctrine they deliver to others, being examples of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, and in purity.

#### SCHOOLS.

The very important subject of the education of our youth, in piety and virtue, and giving them useful learning, under the tuition of religious, prudent persons; having for many years engaged the attention of the Yearly Meeting, and advices having from time to time been issued thereon, to the several subordinate meetings, it is renewedly desired, that Quarterly, Monthly and Preparative Meetings, may be excited to proper exertions for the establishment and support of schools; there being but little doubt, that as Friends are united, and cherish a disposition of liberality for the assistance of each other in this interesting work, they will be enabled to

make such provision, as would encourage well qualified persons to engage in this arduous employment: for want of which, it has been observed, that children have been committed to the care of transient persons, of doubtful character, and sometimes of corrupt minds; by whose example, and influence, they have been betrayed into principles and habits, which have had an injurious effect on them, in more advanced life.

It is therefore indispensably incumbent on us, to guard against this danger, and procure such tutors of our own religious persuasion, as are not only capable of instructing them in useful learning, to fit them for business in relation to temporal concerns; but to train them up in the knowledge of their duty to God, and one towards another.

### SCRIPTURES OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

The holy scriptures, being the external means of preserving and conveying to us, an account of the things most surely to be believed, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh, and the fulfilling of the promises relating thereto, it is the earnest concern of the Yearly Meeting, to press upon Friends of all ranks, a diligent acquaintance with the sacred records;

and that parents and heads of families, would, both by example and advice, impress upon the susceptible and retentive minds of the youth, a reverent esteem for the doctrines and precepts of the christian religion, contained therein; inducing them to believe, that the same experience of the work of sanctification, through the operation of the spirit of God, to which the holy scriptures abundantly bear testimony, is to be witnessed by believers in all generations, as well as by those in the first ages of Christianity. Our dear youth, thus educated in the belief of these important truths, as well as of the inward manifestation and operation of the Spirit of God, may be prepared to receive his spiritual appearance in their hearts, according to our holy profession.

#### STOCK.

A Stock having by experience been found useful for the occasions of the society, and particularly in the application from time to time made by our Meeting for Sufferings, it is desired by the Yearly Meeting, that the same be occasionally renewed by a collection from each Quarter; and that it be continued in the hands of the treasurer, appointed by the meeting, and be subject to be drawn out by its direction, or by the Meeting for Sufferings, as the exigencies of society may require.

The sums which may be thought necessary, are to be raised by each Quarter, in the proportions which may, from time to time, be ascertained by the Yearly Meeting.

## TAVERNS.

It is the concern of the Yearly Meeting, to caution not only the youth, but those of riper age, to avoid the unnecessary frequenting of taverns, and other places of public resort, in order that they may not be exposed to evil company, and unprofitable conversation, or be betrayed into the use of strong liquors, by which many have been corrupted, both in principle and practice, to the ruin of themselves and their families. And if any be in danger on these accounts, it is desired that they may be timely and tenderly treated with, in order to convince them thereof.

Considering the snares and temptations to which those are exposed, who keep houses of entertainment, and the corrupting influence of many who resort to them, it is the desire of the Yearly Meeting, that our members may avoid engaging in such employments for a livelihood, and attend to the pointings of pure wisdom for that end.

And it is also desired, that Friends may endeavour, as far as their influence extends in the

community, to prevent the unnecessary increase of taverns, and to be cautious of signing petitions in behalf of those who may apply for licences on that account.

## TESTIMONIES

### OF DENIAL AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

It is the judgment of the Yearly Meeting, that offenders, whether under dealing, or disowned, who incline to make acknowledgment of their offences, shall prepare the same in writing; which ought to be shewn, if under dealing, to the committee appointed in their case; or if disowned, to the overseers. And if the purport is judged to be suitable to the occasion, the party may present it to the Monthly Meeting, and stay till it is read; and after time given for a solid pause, should withdraw, before either that, or any other business, is proceeded upon. The meeting is then to consider the case, and appoint two or more Friends to inform the party of the result.

In all cases, those who are under dealing for offences, and who offer acknowledgments to Monthly Meetings previous to disownment, ought to particularize in such offerings, the matter or matters charged upon them.

And in relation to acknowledgments, from those who have been disowned; the ground upon which

they ought to be accepted, being a belief on the part of Monthly Meetings of their sincerity and contrition ; when this is apparent, it is not expedient to oblige such to recite the particular misconduct with which they have been charged, and which has been specified in testimonies of denial against them.

When a disowned person removes without the verge of the Monthly Meeting of which he or she has been a member, and becomes concerned to be again united to the society, such person may make application to the Monthly Meeting within the compass of which he or she resides, giving information of their disownment, and by what Monthly Meeting : the particular occasion of disownment such Monthly Meeting is not enjoined to require. But if upon noticing the application, the Monthly Meeting believes in the sincerity of such individual, and finds nothing to prevent amongst them, enquiry must be made of the Monthly Meeting, by which the applicant has been disowned (provided such Monthly Meeting exist) concerning its consent to their reception of such person, and after information therefrom, that nothing appears to obstruct, such applicant may be by them received.

In all cases when a Monthly Meeting apprehends itself under a necessity to disown a member, it is the desire of the Yearly Meeting, that

such member, if his or her situation will admit of it, be previously informed thereof; and when a testimony of disownment is issued against such individual, a copy thereof should be offered to the party testified against, with a notification of his or her right of appeal.

It is also the conclusion of the Yearly Meeting, that it is not expedient to publish at our Meetings for Worship either testimonies of denial or acknowledgments.

### TRADE.

It being evident, that where the manifestations and restraints of the spirit of truth are duly prized and regarded, it leads out of a bondage to the spirit of this world, and preserves the minds of its followers from many fettering and disqualifying entanglements; and contrarywise, that an inordinate love and pursuit of worldly riches, often betrays those who are captivated by them, into many difficulties and dangers, to the great obstruction of the work of truth in the heart: we affectionately desire that the counsel and gracious promise of our blessed Redeemer to his followers, may be borne in remembrance by us,  
“ Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.”

The Yearly Meeting being earnestly concerned

that the service of our religious society may not be obstructed, or its reputation dishonoured, by any imprudence of its members in their worldly engagements, recommends to all, that they be careful not to venture upon business they do not understand ; nor to launch in trade beyond their abilities, and at the risk of others ; but that they bound their engagements by their means ; and when they enter into contracts, or agreements, whether written, or by words, that they endeavour on all occasions strictly to fulfil them, that no occasion of reproach may be given to truth, and the society.

We particularly exhort, that none engage in any such concerns, as depend on the deceptive probabilities of hazardous enterprizes ; but rather content themselves with such a plain and moderate way of living, as is consistent with the self-denying principle of which we make profession, whereby many disappointments and grievous perplexities may be avoided, and that tranquility of mind obtained which is inseparable from the right enjoyment, even of temporal things. And it is advised that, when any amongst us err, or are in danger of erring, in these respects, they be faithfully and timely admonished.

It is further recommended, that Friends frequently inspect the state of their affairs, and

keep their accounts so clear and accurate, that they may, at any time, easily know whether they live within the bounds of their circumstances, or not; and, in case of death, that these may not be perplexing to survivors. And whenever any find that they have no more property left than is sufficient to discharge their just debts, it is advised, that they immediately consult with some judicious Friends, and, without loss of time, make their circumstances known to their creditors, carefully avoiding the payment of one in preference to another, that so none may be injured, nor any reproach incurred by mismanagement.

And where overseers, or other concerned Friends, have reason to fear that any person or family, by living above their means, or from a want of punctuality in fulfilling their contracts, or any other cause, are declining in their circumstances, and likely to fail, it is recommended that such be seasonably treated with, and (if it appear requisite) advised to call their creditors together without delay; and if, notwithstanding this advice, such persons still persist, and run into embarrassment, to the loss of others, and to their own disreputation, the Preparative or Monthly Meeting to which they belong, ought to be timely informed thereof, and proceed to deal with them according to our rules: When,

if this labour also prove ineffectual, a testimony of denial may be issued against them.

It is directed, that where such failures occur, and the cases are under the care of Monthly Meetings, that the Friends appointed to visit the parties, enquire of their assignees or trustees, how their deficiencies have happened, and report accordingly. And it is the judgment of the Yearly Meeting, that neither Monthly nor other Meetings should receive subscriptions, donations, nor bequests, from persons so circumstanced, until they have paid off their deficiencies, or are voluntarily acquitted thereof by their creditors: for it should be remembered, that though in such cases, the defaulter may have been legally discharged, the property he may afterwards acquire is not properly his own, till he has fairly paid off his former debts, to the satisfaction of the creditors. Wherefore, we further direct, that if any such person or persons, on being suitably reminded of their duty in this respect, shall refuse to comply therewith, enquiry be made into the reason, and if it be not such as shall satisfy the Monthly Meetings of which they are members, and they cannot be prevailed with; the said meetings, after a proper time of labour and forbearance, may issue a testimony of denial against them.

We also desire, that when Friends accept the office of assignee, or trustee, they be active in collecting the effects of the estate, and punctual and speedy in making distribution.

We warn our members against a pernicious practice amongst the trading part of the community, which has often terminated in the ruin of those concerned therein, viz: That of raising and circulating a kind of paper credit, with endorsements, to give it an appearance of value, without an intrinsic reality; a practice, which, as it appears to be inconsistent with the truth we profess, we declare our disapprobation of, and intreat every member of our society to avoid and discourage.

We also caution all in membership with us, to be careful how they enter into joint securities with others, under the specious plea of rendering acts of kindness; many, by so doing, having been suddenly ruined, and their innocent wives and children reduced to deplorable circumstances. “Be “not thou,” said the wise man, “one of them “that strike hands, or of them that are sureties “for debts: if thou hast nothing to pay, why “should he take away thy bed from under thee?”

It is the affectionate desire of the Yearly Meeting, that Friends may wait for divine counsel in all their engagements, and not suffer their minds to be carried away by an inordinate desire

of worldly riches; remembering the observation of the Apostle in his day, and so often sorrowfully verified in ours; "they who will be rich, " fall into temptation, and a snare, and erring "from the faith, pierce themselves through with "many sorrows." Even when riches to any extraordinary degree have been amassed, by the successful industry of parents, how often have they proved like wings to their children, carrying them beyond the limitations of truth, into liberties repugnant to our religious testimonies, and sometimes into enterprizes, which have terminated in irreparable damage to their temporal affairs, if not an entire forgetfulness of the great work of their souls' salvation.

We do not condemn industry; we believe it to be not only praise-worthy, but indispensable; it is the desire of great things, and the engrossment of the time and attention, from which we desire, that our dear Friends may be preserved. We doubtless owe duties to ourselves, and our families, but do we not owe even ourselves to our all-wise, all-protecting, and provident Creator?

## WAR.

Believing, as we do, that the spirit of the Gospel breathes "peace on earth, and good will "to men," it is the earnest concern of the Year.

ly Meeting, that Friends may adhere faithfully to our ancient testimony against wars and fightings, avoiding to unite with any in warlike measures, either offensive or defensive; that by the innocence of our conduct, we may convincingly demonstrate ourselves to be real subjects of the Messiah's peaceful reign, and be instrumental in the promotion thereof, towards its desired completion; when, according to ancient prophecy, "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of "the Lord, as the waters cover the sea; and its "inhabitants shall learn war no more."

In relation to this testimony, it is our judgment that when goods have been distrained from any, on account of a refusal to pay fines for non-performance of military services, and the officers, after deducting the fines and costs, propose to return the remainder, that Friends should maintain their testimony by suffering, rather than accept such overplus, unless the same, or a part of it is returned, without a change of the species.

That furnishing waggons, or other means for conveying of military stores, is a military service; and the care of elders, overseers and faithful Friends, should be extended, in christian tenderness and love, to such as deviate herein, in order to convince them of their error.

And that a tax levied for the purchasing of

drums, colours, or for other warlike uses, cannot be paid consistently with our christian testimony.

It is the fervent concern of the Yearly Meeting, to recommend to the deep attention of all our members, that they be religiously guarded against approving or shewing the least connivance at war, either by attending at, or viewing of military operations, or in anywise encouraging the unstable, deceitful spirit of party, by joining, with political devices or associations, however speciously disguised, under the ensnaring subtleties commonly attendant thereon; but that they sincerely labour to experience a settlement on the alone sure foundation of pure unchangeable truth; whereby, through the prevalence of unfeigned christian love, and good will to men, we may convincingly demonstrate, that the kingdom we seek is not of this world; but a kingdom and government whose subjects are free indeed, redeemed from those captivating lusts, from whence come wars and fightings.

And that the members of our religious society would carefully avoid engaging in any trade or business promotive of war, sharing or partaking of the spoils of war, by purchasing or selling prize-goods, importing or shipping goods in armed vessels, paying taxes for the express purpose of war, or from pecuniary motives grinding of grain, feeding of cattle, or disposing of their pro-

perty, for the use of the army; that through a close attention to the monitions of divine grace, and guarding against the suppression of it, either in themselves or others, they may be preserved in a conduct consistent with our holy profession, and from wounding the minds or increasing the sufferings of each other; not at all doubting, that He to whom appertains the kingdom, and the power, who is wonderful in working, will continue to carry on and perfect his blessed cause of peace on the earth. A due attention to this concern is recommended to Quarterly, Monthly and Preparative Meetings, and to Friends in general; it being the judgment of the Yearly Meeting, that if any of our members do, either openly, or by connivance, pay any fine, penalty, or tax, in lieu of personal service for carrying on war, or allow their children, apprentices, or servants, to act therein, or are concerned in arming or equipping vessels with guns, or deal in public certificates issued as a compensation for expences accrued, or services performed in war, that they be tenderly dealt with, and if they cannot be brought to an acknowledgment of their error, Monthly Meetings are authorised to testify against them.

It is further the sense and judgment of the Yearly Meeting, that it is inconsistent with our religious testimony and principle, for any Friend

to pay a fine or tax, levied on account of their refusal to muster or to serve in the militia, although such fine or imposition may be applied towards defraying the expenses of civil government; and where deviations in this respect occur, tender dealing and advice should be extended to the party, in order to their convincement and restoration; and if this prove ineffectual, Monthly Meetings should proceed to testify against them.

And finally, dear Friends, upon the calamitous subject of war, you are not ignorant of what adorns our profession. Let us seek peace and pursue it, remembering that we are called to love. Oh! that the smallest germ of enmity might be eradicated from our enclosure; and truly there is a soil in which it cannot live; this soil is christian humility. May we therefore be peaceable ourselves, in words and actions, seeking for that disposition, in which we can pray to the Father of the Universe, that he may breathe the spirit of reconciliation into the hearts of his erring and contending creatures.

## WILLS.

Knowing how quickly many are removed by death, it is weightily recommended by the Yearly Meeting, that care be taken by each Monthly Meeting, that Friends who have estates to dis-

pose of, be advised to make their wills in time of health and strength of judgment, and therein to direct their substance as in justice and wisdom may be to their satisfaction and peace; laying aside all resentment, though occasion may have been given, lest it should go with them to the grave; remembering, we all stand in need of mercy and forgiveness. Making such wills in due time, can shorten no one's days; but the omission or delay thereof to a time of sickness, when the mind should not be diverted from a solemn consideration of the approaching awful period of life, has often proved very injurious to many, and been the occasion of creating dissents and animosities in families, which the more seasonable and deliberate performance of this necessary duty might have prevented.

We also recommend to Friends, to employ persons of competent legal knowledge, to write their wills, as great inconvenience and injury to families have sometimes happened, through the unskilfulness of some who have taken upon them to write wills.

We further desire, that executors and trustees concerned in wills, and settlements, may take especial care to discharge faithfully their respective trusts, according to the intent of the donors and testators; and that all charitable gifts, legacies, bequests and settlements of estates, by will or deed,

intended and given for the use of the poor, the aged, the impotent, or for the education or apprenticeships of the children of poor Friends, may not be appropriated or converted to any other uses than such as the donors or testators have directed. A violation herein, being an obvious perversion of justice, offenders in these respects should be dealt with; and unless they make due satisfaction to the injured parties, and to the meeting to which they belong, should be disowned.

### WOMEN'S MEETINGS.

As our Women's Meetings for Discipline were set up and established in divine wisdom, and by long experience have been found of advantage, not only to the society in general, but to the youth of their own sex in particular; it is earnestly desired that they may be encouraged to come up to the help of their brethren in that part of the discipline of the church properly claiming their attention and care. On considering the nature and extent whereof, it is apprehended that a benefit might accrue, by explicitly setting forth their distinct allotments and separate services, in their Monthly and Quarterly Meetings, and also in their Yearly Meeting.

#### WOMEN'S MONTHLY MEETINGS ARE

I.—To inspect and relieve the wants of the

poor of their own sex; and where their own funds are insufficient, they are to apply to the Men's Meeting for their aid, and for their concurrence, as cases shall require.

II. —To take cognizance of proposals of marriage, and appoint two of their members to enquire into the conversation and clearness of the woman; also, two to the oversight of the marriage.

III.—They are to appoint a suitable number of overseers, who are to treat with offenders of their own sex, that their cases be laid before the Women's Preparative, and, if needful, their Monthly Meeting, which should proceed to deal further with such delinquents, and report the result of their labours to the Men's Meeting; and if further dealing is expedient, the men should appoint a committee to unite with the women therein; the report of which joint committee is to be made to each meeting, and the women, having considered the same, are to inform the Men's Meeting of their sense thereon, where the subject is to be finally settled by the men: But when a case is brought by the women into the Men's Meeting, if on solid consideration further dealing does not appear needful, and the men are most easy to issue it, a committee should be appointed to prepare a testimony of disownment, which, when approved, is to be sent to the Wo-

men's Meeting for their concurrence, and care in delivering it to the party.

IV.—On application of a woman for admission or reinstatement into membership, after a religious care therein hath been exercised by women overseers, and in the Preparative Meeting as the case may require, the Women's Monthly Meeting is to make an appointment to join the men, the report of which united committee is to be made to each meeting, and the Women's Meeting having considered the same, are to convey their sense thereon to the Men's Meeting, where the subject shall be considered and finally settled.

V.—They are to prepare certificates of removal for Women Friends; in order whereto the Women's Monthly Meeting is to appoint two or more of their members to make the necessary enquiry, and after being considered in the Women's, is to be laid before the Men's Meeting; and when there approved and signed, returned to the Women's Meeting for their signature; but if the certificate is intended to include one or more males, then they are to report the result of their enquiry to the Friends named on the like enquiry by the Men's Meeting; in which the certificate being approved and signed, it is to be sent to the Women's Meeting for their concurrence and signing. And all certificates received for Women Friends are to be laid before the Men's Meeting,

before they can be fully accepted by the Women's Meeting. The personal attendance of such Women Friends therewith in Men's Meeting is not required.

VI.—When a woman minister apprehends herself under a religious engagement to travel in truth's service, she is first to lay her concern before the Women's Meeting, and if united with, the same is to be laid before the Men's Meeting, whose judgment is to be communicated to the Women's Meeting, to which, when a certificate for that purpose is prepared and signed by the Men's Meeting, it is to be sent for their concurrence and signing.

VII.—When the nomination of a woman elder is judged expedient, the Women's Meeting should appoint a judicious committee, to join a like committee of the Men's Meeting in the consideration thereof; whose united report is to be communicated to each meeting. And the Women's Meeting, after due deliberation, and previous to their making any conclusive minute thereon, are to impart their sense to the Men's Meeting, for their judgment and determination.

VIII.—The Women's Preparative Meetings, where more than one constitute a Monthly Meeting, are to consider and answer the queries in like manner as directed for the Men's Meeting, which is likewise to be done in their Monthly

Meetings, from which they are to report the state of each Monthly Meeting to their respective Quarterly Meetings ; to attend which, as their representatives, they should nominate two or more of their members.

#### WOMEN'S QUARTERLY MEETINGS.

I.—When a woman minister, under a religious concern to travel in truth's service, produces to the Quarterly Meeting a certificate of the approbation of the Monthly Meeting of which she is a member, if the concern is concurred with in the Women's Meeting, it should be submitted to the Men's Meeting, and when approved, an endorsement to that effect should be made on the certificate, signed by the clerk, and returned to the Women's Meeting, for signing by their clerk.

II.—They are to receive the written accounts sent from the respective Women's Monthly Meetings, and transmit the collected answers to the queries, with such other matters as appear needful, to the Women's Yearly Meeting ; to attend the service whereof, each Quarterly Meeting is to appoint a suitable number of representatives.

III.—They are to communicate to their respective Monthly Meetings, such advices as they apprehend necessary, with any epistles, or wri-

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tings, issued for that purpose by their Yearly Meeting; nominate committees at the request of the Men's Meeting to visit their Monthly Meetings, or for any other service which the Men's Meeting shall judge expedient: and in all respects, they are to attend to those matters which may properly come under the notice and care of Women's Quarterly Meetings.

**THE YEARLY MEETING OF  
WOMEN FRIENDS,**

Held annually in Baltimore, at the time of holding Men's Yearly Meeting, is at liberty to correspond with any other Yearly Meeting of their own sex, either in America or elsewhere; and to issue such counsel and admonition to their own Quarterly and Monthly Meetings, as, in the wisdom of truth, shall appear conducive to real benefit and mutual edification. But the said Yearly Meeting is not to hear, or determine, on any appeal, nor to make or alter any rules of discipline or queries.

They are to have a stock of their own, for such services as may fall more properly under their notice.

And finally, it is desired, that a fair record be kept of the minutes and proceedings of the Yearly, Quarterly, and Monthly Meetings of Women Friends; and that annually, their representatives

to the Yearly Meeting exercise a religious care in the choice of a clerk.

### YEARLY MEETING.

From ancient records it appears, that the first Yearly Meeting in Maryland was held on West River, in the year 1672, O. S. That for many years the meeting was held alternately at West River, on the western shore, and at Tredhaven, on the eastern shore of Maryland: That agreeably to an arrangement, which took place in the year 1790, the Yearly Meeting was removed to be held in Baltimore only, and to be composed of representatives from the Quarterly Meetings on the western shore of Maryland, and the adjacent parts of Pennsylvania and Virginia; to which has since been added the state of Ohio.

The Yearly Meeting is held on the second First day in the Tenth Month. A public Meeting for Worship at the tenth hour in the morning, and another at the third hour in the afternoon. The Meeting for Discipline is opened at the tenth hour on Second day morning following. The Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders is held on the Seventh day of the week, preceding, and now concluded to be opened also at the tenth hour in the morning.

The representatives from the Quarterly Meetings are annually to choose a clerk, and an assistant,

at the close of the first sitting of the Meeting for Discipline ; whose names are to be reported at the opening of the next sitting.

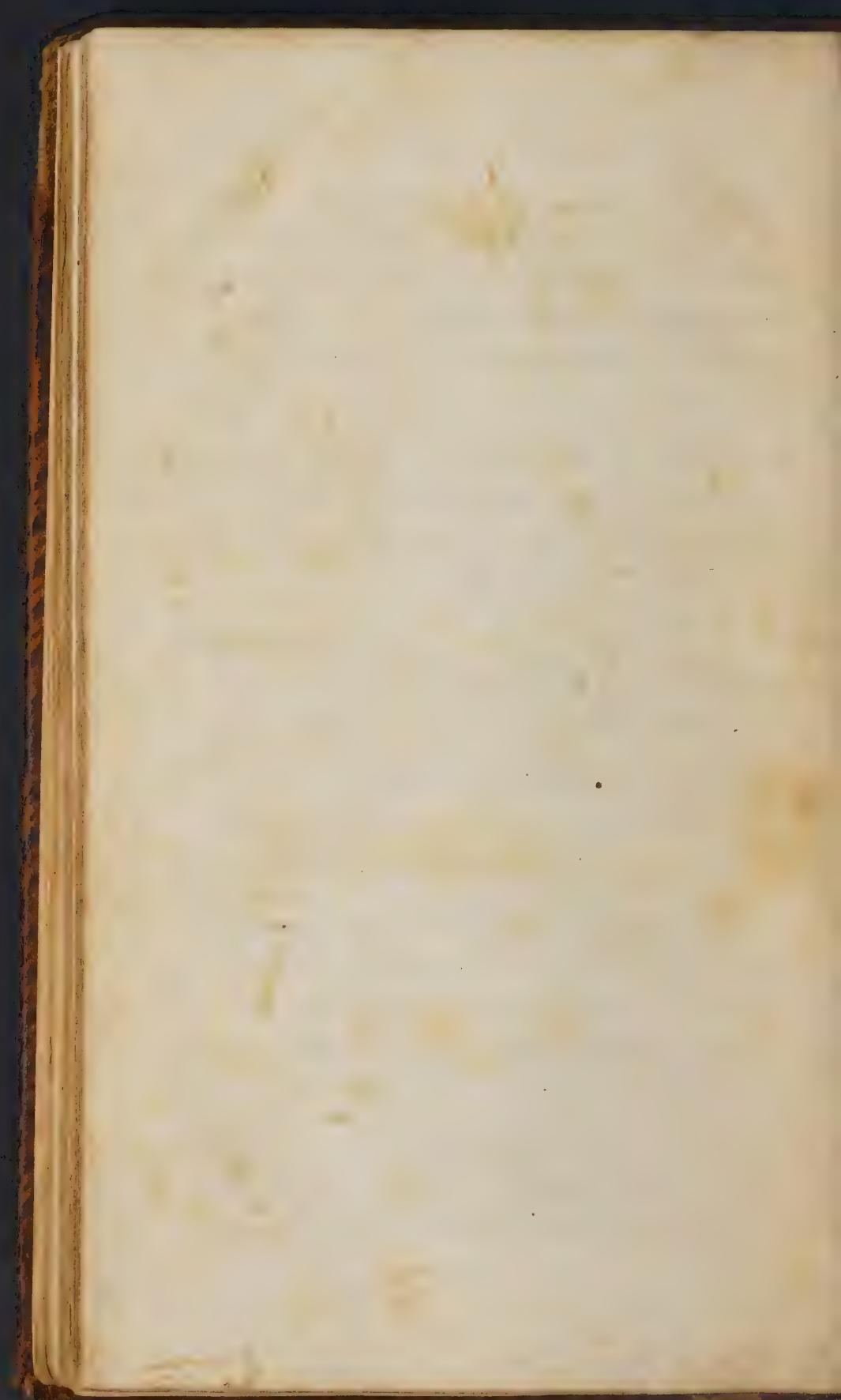
Representatives having the care of the reports from the Quarterly Meetings, are to put them into the hands of the clerk to the Meeting for the preceding year, before the opening of the Meeting for Discipline, in order that time may be saved to the Meeting, by a previous entry of the names of representatives. No representative ought to withdraw, or leave the city, before the Yearly Meeting ends, without leave first requested and granted.

All communications directed to the Yearly Meeting, except from such meetings as correspond regularly therewith, are to be previously perused by a nomination of Friends for the purpose; who are to consider and report, whether the same be proper to be read in the Yearly Meeting.

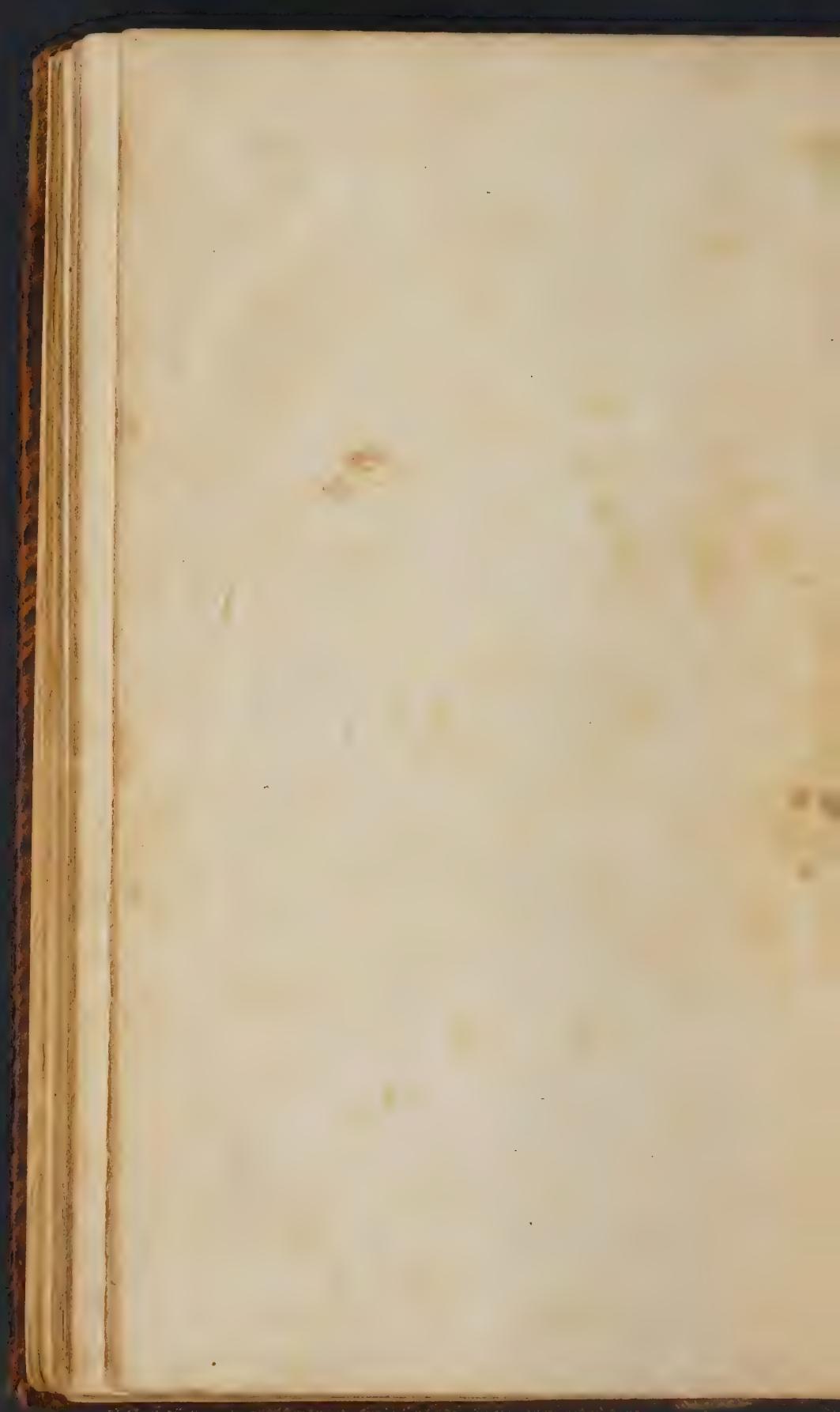
The design of our Annual Meetings in their first constitution, being in order to a general oversight, and care of the churches, pertaining to our christian communion, it remains to be our fervent desire, that good order, unity and concord may be maintained amongst us. We know that love and unity, founded upon christian principles, are promotive of truth and righteousness amongst ourselves, and we believe also, that

when conspicuous in us, they have their influence upon those around us. Under these considerations, we fervently desire, and humbly hope, that He who hath to the present day, preserved us a people highly favoured, will be graciously pleased, still to animate us with a zealous concern, that love and good will may predominate in us individually, and that union, peace, and concord, may prevail in every department of the family. And, finally, Friends, collectively and individually, may all our meetings be held with weight, as in the immediate presence of the Head of the Church; may the aged amongst us be examples of every christian virtue, and evince by the calmness of their evening, that their day has been blest: May the middle aged not faint in their stations; but, together with their elder and younger brethren, firmly support, yea exalt the several testimonies which we are called to maintain. And, oh may the beloved youth bend early and cheerfully, under the forming power of truth; that each standing in his allotment, the harmony of the building may be preserved, and we may truly grow up into a holy temple for the Lord.

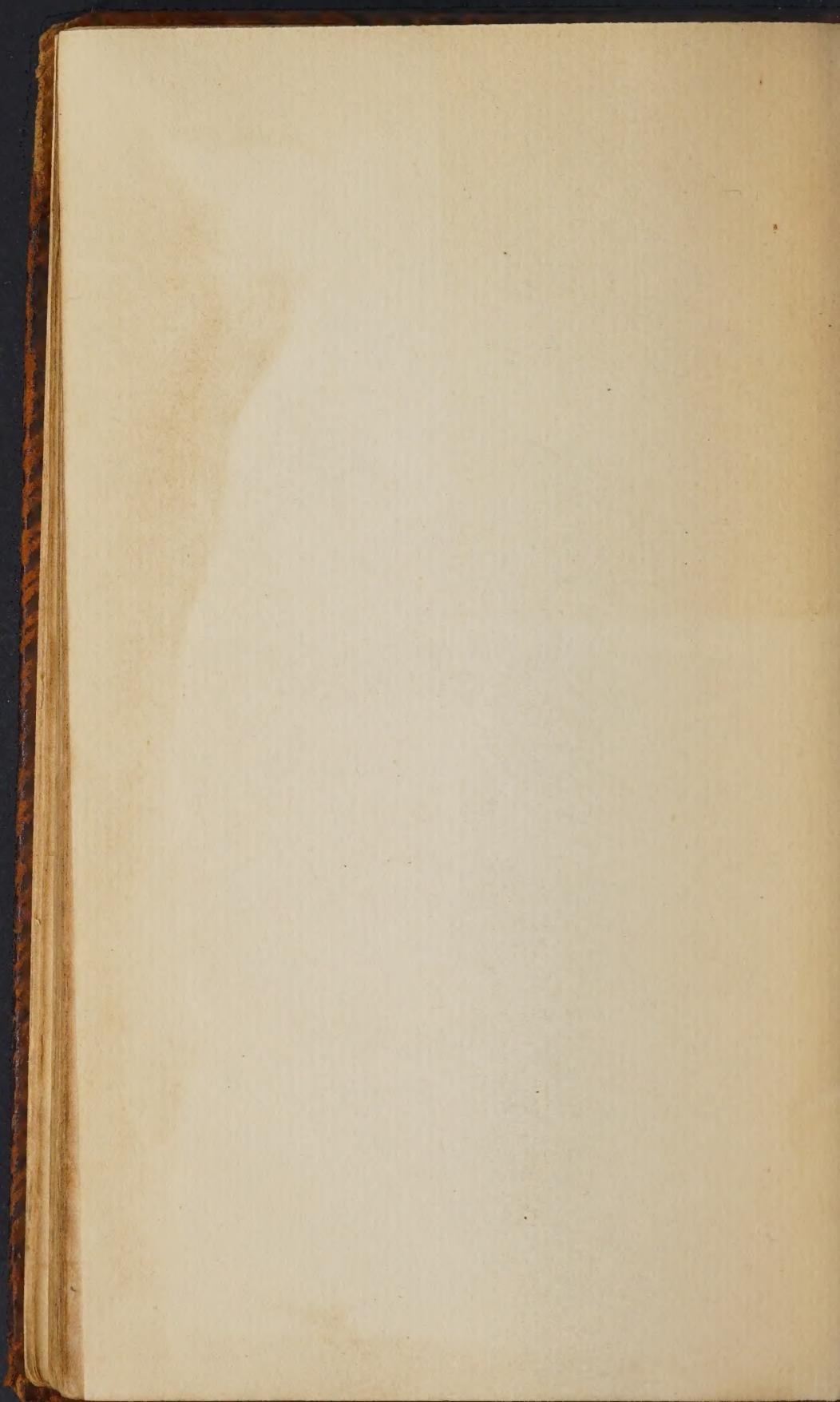












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